

# Estonian Art

1/2013

ACCLIMATING

LOCAL

TALLOW

PLOTTING

RAISED

INTEND

PEERS

WISHFUL

PROPORTION

SINCERING

BEAD

INCH

RESPECTIVE

PLURAL

DIMENSIONS

FROSTY

FLEAS

EAST

UNDERWINTER

TRAVELED

TRAVELING

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# ***Evident in Advance:* the maze of translations**

Merilin Talumaa  
Marie Vellevoog

At the 55th Venice Biennale, Estonia is represented by the artist Dénes Farkas, with his project *Evident in Advance*. The project was developed in collaboration with an international team. The exhibition opened on 1 June and remains open until 24 November 2013. Director of the Kumu Art Museum Anu Liivak has expressed her hope of also hosting the project in the future in Kumu [Art Museum]. The current article is based on the press conference held on 18 March in Kumu and on a subsequent interview with the team members.

## **The Dream Team**

The team of the Estonian pavilion, which Dénes Farkas has characterised as *Dream Team*, consists of the artist himself, the curator Adam Budak, the exhibition architect Markus Miessen, designers from the Zak Group, Zak Kyes and Grégory Ambos, and several linguists and philosophers who have contributed to *The Book*, which will be produced as a part of the project. The collaboration between Farkas and Budak started about two years ago, when Budak was invited to curate the Tallinn Month of Photography exhibition in Kumu and found inspiration in Farkas's works: "I was very much fascinated by the complexity and intensity of his practice, by the modesty of the artist, and by the worlds he creates and seeks."

Around a master narrative of Farkas's works, the project started to accumulate as a series of different stages that proceeded from one another, growing to a remarkably international scale for the Estonian art scene. Subsequently, other members of the team were incorporated on the basis of whose practice would best respond to the ideas and concerns of the project. Markus Miessen explains his reason for collaborating as a challenge that will also enrich his own practice: "It is a very spatial work and I think that there is a lot of interpretive potential in bringing something that is already very spatial in terms of content into the space." Focusing a lot on communication, Miessen's practice brings relevant ideas to the project and can be seen as not purely

architectural, as we understand it commonly, but rather as artistic. The designers from Zak Group have played an important role in bringing the content provided by Farkas, Budak and Miessen into the book and translating it into the design and visual identity of the project.

## **Zeitgeist**

When the project was chosen for the Estonian pavilion, the general theme of the biennale had not yet been announced. The fact that the theme of the project corresponds well with Massimiliano Gioni's *Il Palazzo Enciclopedico* is merely a coincidence. Nevertheless, there seems to be a certain *Zeitgeist* that leads to the occurrence of similar ideas, especially considering that this kind of archaeological, interdisciplinary *Wunderkammer* style of curating has lately also occurred elsewhere, including in *documenta 13*. As Budak states: "It is something that really corresponds with the current desires to mix art with artefacts that come from other disciplines that are not usually perceived as parts of the contemporary art field."

In the case of Farkas' practice, it is possible to talk about a recurring neo-minimalist and neo-conceptualist trend that can be noticed in the local art scene, as well as on a wider international scale. Budak follows up by elaborating on the changes in the art world: "There is a kind of seduction that is going on among young artists to refer to the heroic moments of the 20th century. I think that this could be the moment now to look more profoundly back to the 60s and 70s. This is not only connected to artistic practice but also to curatorial practice. Exhibition formats are being reworked and questioned, especially the Venice Biennale, which is based on national identity"

## **National Pavilion**

To describe this year's project, the Estonian Pavilion commissioner Maria Arusoo used the words of Bruce Duffy: it is a kind of intellectual opera. Since the members of this year's team are from around the world, a lot of meetings were held online or in different loca-

Dénes Farkas. *Evident in Advance*. 2013. Estonian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale.



tions in Europe. Dénes Farkas is half-Estonian, half-Hungarian, and is based in Tallinn. The Polish-born curator Adam Budak lives in Los Angeles. Markus Miessen lives in Berlin and London. Grégory Ambos and Zak Kyes are based in London. Given all this, one may wonder about its identity as a national pavilion. Is it even justifiable to speak of a national pavilion in the case of such an international team?

It seems that the internationalisation of pavilions is becoming more common in the biennale format. This year, for example, Latvian and Russian pavilions have also invited foreign curators. Perhaps the format of the biennale is indeed undergoing a change in terms of nationality. Maria Arusoo believes that having such an international team gives an artist a new perspective: “This is a chance to get fresh feedback and to see one’s own work in a new light.” Adam Budak has doubts about the importance of nationality in the art scene, saying that identifying oneself with a certain nation has become vague. “It is not important where the artist was born but where the artist is based. In most cases, born in and based in don’t match.”

### ***The World As I Found It***

At the beginning of the project, Budak immediately recalled the novel by the American writer Bruce Duffy, *The World As I Found It* (1987). Bruce Duffy happens to be Budak’s neighbour in Washington, DC, and Budak took that almost as a sign. The images and installations of the exhibition have been created with the feeling of the book. “Bruce Duffy narrates a magical story, somewhere phantasmagorically suspended in a cloud, the story of the life of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. He was a philosopher of mathematics, of mind, of language, but also a philosopher of colour and a dilettante architect. Wittgenstein built an amazing house on a fjord in Norway, although it was totally dysfunctional and uninhabitable. This corresponds very much with what we want to achieve with the exhibition, which is a maze, a labyrinth of ideas. Ideas that one can actually lose oneself in.”

What Duffy does in the book is pure deconstruction: “The book is written in Wittgensteinian language, and is about performing a kind of surgery, taking things out of one context and putting them into another. Shifting and rehearsing, trying things in dif-

ferent ways and matching elements.” *The World As I Found It* emphasises the isolation of absence: “There’s no subject because it’s lost and we failed to find it. It’s not that you can enter and see the world as I found it or as he found it, but it’s to trigger or initiate the mechanism in the mind to see it. It is a reconstructed stage, like the rebellious spectacle of language that Duffy creates within the framework of this book.”

### ***Evident in Advance***

The philosophical ideas of Wittgenstein as they are presented in Bruce Duffy’s novel have been used as a basis for the project. As Budak explains: “*The World as I Found It* is about the *I*, who I am and how I perceive this world. This quest for my identity is very crucial. This kind of *I* identity is present in Dénes’ seemingly abstract work, which is very much focused on quadrigeneric space, which is absent: there are no human beings in it. It is focused on naked architecture, the under-skin of architecture, how architecture is perceived by our eyes. In this sense, you could say it is biographical, the story of life.” The title of the project, *Evident in Advance* is based on one of the most crucial notions in Wittgenstein’s philosophy: his perception of the world was based on *a priori* propositions that are evident.

The philosophical nature of Farkas’s works corresponds well with the way the world is perceived in Bruce Duffy’s novel. The content of the book is translated, reworked, deconstructed and placed into the context of Farkas’s works, composing the narrative of the exhibition. Budak has characterised the world that is created as follows: “The word ‘dream’ is a keyword to enter the world of Dénes Farkas, a world that is out of focus a little bit. A world that is black and white, with shades of grey. A world that is imperfect, imprecise and extremely poetic and theatrical. The book by Bruce Duffy brings in the complexity between what is real and what is fiction, what is truth and what is fake, and it can be applied to the world which Farkas creates.” The project is connected to Farkas’s earlier practice but the dispersal of a singular artist position that comes from working with a team has definitely influenced the artist, who has previously only worked alone. The project includes additional experimental elements that open up his practice from a new perspective, creating some surprises and unexpected twists.

## Exhibition Space

This year the Estonian Pavilion is presented in a new environment, in another rented apartment in the Palazzo Malipiero. As the entrance of the apartment is virtually next door to the Palazzo Grassi, it is more exposed and approachable than previous locations.

The exhibition site was chosen before the project had begun. Therefore, the nature of the site determined the way the project was set up. The master plan was inspired by the surroundings, the rose garden and the residential nature of the site. Budak believes that the domestic nature of the apartment gives a unique feeling to the whole project: "It is not a public space, as in the usual pavilion, but a private one. We find this to be positive since it creates a certain intimacy. Dénes's work is about psychological interior space; the idea is to enter into the artist's mind."

The curator continues to describe the process of working with predetermined spatial surroundings: "For Wittgenstein it was a language game; we deal with the exhibition as a game because it is a certain maze: there is a winding hallway and there are four rooms that are like chambers, where you can enter into chapters, as in a book." Farkas adds that these are rooms where we normally encounter texts: an archive, a classroom, a library and a home. "Reading is a very intimate activity because it's just me and the world that is inside the book, which is a whole world, but there is nothing in between. I'm into it with my eyes and mind and ability to read. So this is the most intimate space possible."

Budak finds it inspiring to work with spaces that are not regular, neutral white cubes or museums. As he says: "In the apartment, there are the memories of all those other lives and you cannot escape this. You cannot pretend, for example, that this dining room is not a dining room." It will be fascinating to see what effect the domestic environment will have on the project as a whole. This influence may be difficult to pin down before the project has finally materialised, even by the artists themselves.

In addition to having chosen an unconventional site, the project has another twist: it intentionally aims to confuse. Budak remarks that the biennale is very much focused on spectacular projects. "We want to try to create a situation that is very confusing. And in this case the piece of work is a study of confusion.

We trust the viewer to be courageous enough to take this confusion as something that is a friendly gesture rather than an annoying gesture of being lost in this world." Given the nature of the biennale, one may of course wonder whether a visitor, having struggled through numerous exhibitions, will have any energy left to really focus on this study of confusion.

## The Book

*The Book*, designed by Grégory Ambos and Zak Kyes, and published by the reputable Sternberg Press will form part of the exhibition. The two designers from the Zak Group are also in charge of creating a visual identity for the Estonian pavilion. Ambos sees *The Book* as more than just a documentation of the exhibition: "It is a kind of expanded space, an experimentation of space. The idea is to confront the images created by Dénes."

*The Book*, which reflects Ambos's and Kyes's practice, will include a number of essays and texts by various authors. There will be a brand new text by Bruce Duffy and an essay by Daniele Monticelli, who is an Italian philosopher of language. Daniele and Dénes have discussed the project a lot so it is an ongoing relationship and collaboration. Plus there will be an essay by the Vienna-based philosopher and linguist Martin Prinzhorn, and an essay by Markus Miessen on the philosophy of the exhibition design and architecture. Also *The Book* will include two essential reference texts: 'The Absence of the Book', a very famous essay by the French philosopher Maurice Blanchot, and 'Once Desired to Tell the Story', by the Italian feminist philosopher Adriana Cavarero.

## Dénes Farkas

(1974), has received an MA in photography from the Estonian Academy of Arts. His post-conceptual photobased practice engineers the substructures of society at the moment it renews and remakes its identity. In 2013 his project *Evident in Advance*, (curated by Adam Budak) represents Estonia at the 55th Venice Biennale.

## Merilin Talumaa

(1986), studied art history at the Estonian Academy of Arts, currently doing there her MA.

## Marie Vellevoog

(1991), BA in art history at the University of Tartu. Currently doing her MA in art history at the Estonian Academy of Arts.



## ***Evident in Advance,* or lost (and gained) in translation(s)?**

Daniele Monticelli

This piece of writing is inspired by Denés Farkas' exhibition *Evident in Advance* and, at the same time, exploits it in order to discuss a more general issue. As a philosopher who followed from the beginning the process of thinking and creation that brought to realization Farkas' project at the Venice Biennale, it is intriguing for me to raise the question of the (non)relationship between an idea and the ways of expressing it in art or, in other words, the (non)relationship between the (homogeneous) One of the concept and the (heterogeneous) multiple ways of its embodiment in real objects.

In this respect, entering *Evident in Advance* will not fail to have a puzzling effect on the visitor. As a matter of fact, Denés Farkas' *mise-en-scènes* constitute a complex ensemble of different artistic means – photography, interior design, written and spoken language, and (absent) moving images – which mobilize different perceptive and cognitive faculties in the visitor, luring her into the labyrinthine articulation of the exhibition-spaces, where the search for an all comprehensive meaning or developing story will seemingly be frustrated. However, as the artist's introduction to the exhibition explicitly claims, the project has one fundamental and unifying source of inspiration in the American writer Bruce Duffy's novel *The world as I found it* (1987). This book is also the origin of all the linguistic samples at the exhibition: from the single words of Farkas' 'library', the sentences in Farkas' 'illustrated books' and the passages resounding and running as the subtitles of an absent film, to the very title of the exhibition. Duffy's novel is a piece of 'literary fiction', as the author warns us in his preface, but a peculiar kind of fiction insofar as the plot follows quite precisely the real lives of three contemporary philosophers of language: Ludwig Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell and George Edward Moore.

We can therefore understand the kind of (non)relationship that interests us here in terms of a multi-layered and multi-directional translation which does not simply move between different languages, but between different systems of signs, and fundamentally differing, even incommensurable, ways of articulating and mediating reality, whose encounter may give rise to unpredictable developments and change. The semiotician Juri Lotman has named such problematic encounters between heterogeneous systems 'translations of the untranslatable' which, on the one hand, will never be adequate, and, on the other hand, work as mechanisms for the generation of new meanings.

How does a life create a thought (a philosophy), how is a thought (philosophy) deployed in a life and how can all this be made into a story? This is the multiple, complex and somewhat circular process of translation that the choice of Duffy's book bequeaths to the exhibition from the very beginning. And the exhibition cannot but bring this process further: how can a story (and a life, and a thought) be transformed into pieces of art? One thing seems to be clear here: the results of these 'translations of the untranslatable' will in no way be 'evident in advance', as the intentionally misleading title of the exhibition seems to suggest. But let us consider some of the interesting ways by which Farkas and the architect Markus Miessen articulate and, at the same time, thematize the (im)possibilities of such problematic translations.

First of all, the deconstruction and reconstruction of Duffy's text in Farkas' exhibition is in itself a paradigmatic illustration of what a translation has always been supposed to be: the transference (Latin *trans-latus*) of the very same thing from one place to another. However, the exhibition presents Duffy's text only in/as mutilated pieces; the translated thing is actually haunted by its losses,

and consequently loses its integrity and self-identity: any translation is destined to remain always partial, incomplete and inadequate. But the exhibition leaves us neither time nor reasons for nostalgia toward originals; on the contrary, it immediately compels us to consider trans-lated pieces of the novel in their new environment where they are re-contextualized on the basis of their association with a wholly new imagery of pictures and spaces.

Thus, single words from Duffy's novel become hundreds of different titles for the same couple of Farkas' 'books'. Are they as many different 'translations' for the very same book, many different stories narratable through the very same combination of words and images? Or does the repetitiveness of the books actually efface the difference in the meanings of their different titles? The possibilities and limits of seriality, repetition and variation are central topics in contemporary art, philosophy and, of course, translation.

On the 'pages' of the exhibition's 'books', sentences from Duffy's novel are associated with Farkas' pictures. A common sense notion of translation would here predict a kind of pictorial correspondence between image and language, as in textbooks for small children where the picture of an object is accompanied by the 'corresponding' word: an apple is an 'apple'. But Farkas' pictures become enigmatic as soon as we try to translate them into objects or states of affairs. It may seem, at first glance, possible to interpret their elements as familiar things (corners, walls, pillars, colonnades, staircases and so on) forming different spatial configurations, but the pictorial resemblance of the elements of his pictures to objects of the real world actually makes their mutilated condition and the contrast between rectilinear silhouettes delimited by blades of light and the fuzziness of contours obtained through shadows and focus even more disquieting. Just like the exposed pieces of Duffy's text, Farkas' pictures are decontextualized fragments constructed by different devices for the displacement of familiar shapes and spaces which transport the viewer into slightly uncanny states of affairs. Thus, instead of transparently translating pictures into language and language into pictures, the pages of Farkas' imaginary books juxtapose context-less sentences suspended above the void to enigmatically unrelated pictures. How can, for instance, a bent 'staircase' disappear-

ing behind a 'corner' possibly translate (or be translated by) a statement such as 'This was nothing but a fiction belonging to primitive notions of psychology'? Nothing is 'evident in advance' here; we have instead a paradoxical situation where untranslatability seems to be the case, but the unavoidable association created by the artist's juxtaposition of picture and statement still compels the visitor to look for a(n im)possible translation, which may of course fail, but also become the unexpected origin of unpredictable and new meanings.

Translation has, however, also its boundaries and constraints, its norms which are set in place by its context, target and, consequently, its aim, the effects it is supposed to bring about in the situation in which it takes place. The spaces of the exhibition mix in recognizable ways cultural and educational





## **Evident in Advance,**

has been developed in close collaboration with Studio Miessen, led by Markus Miessen in Berlin. The exhibition is accompanied by a publication designed by Zak Kyes (Zak Group) and published by Sternberg Press. The Estonian Pavilion is located in the Palazzo Malipiero, San Samuele Square, S. Marco 3199, 2nd floor (vaporetto stop San Samuele). The Estonian Pavilion is organised by the Center for Contemporary Arts, Estonia, [www.cca.ee](http://www.cca.ee). For more information, see [www.evident-in-advance.com](http://www.evident-in-advance.com)

institutions – a library, an archive, a classroom and an exhibition hall – which work, in our societies, as different mediating frameworks of our access to knowledge and thinking. Trans-lated into or, more precisely, *through* these institutions, the fragments of Duffy's novels and Farkas' pictures tend to be framed in familiar objects – books in a library, files in an archive, textbooks in a classroom and exhibits in a museum – which force them into a pre-determined network of interpretations and uses.

If evidence in advance is a mere chimera and we are actually from the very beginning always lost (and gained) in translation, it is the tension – both dialogue and conflict – between this kind of normative, institutionalized translation and the always inadequate and unpredictable translation of the untranslatable to offer us a good description not only of one of the central topics in Farkas' exhibition, but also, more generally, of the working of both art and thought/philosophy, and of their relationship. It is therefore misleading to oppose, as I did at the beginning of this piece of writing, the unity of the concept to its diversifying and heterogenizing artistic realization, because as soon as the concept enters thinking it loses its homogeneity and originality and gets captured into a process of translation, it becomes multiple. This constitutive

'translational multiplicity' of the concept is also the condition of possibility for its further translation into (multiple and multiplying) artistic devices.

So much for art and philosophy, but what about life, that very same life (of Wittgenstein, Russell and Moore) from which this whole translational phantasmagoria seems to have stemmed and come into being? According to contemporary biosemiotics, life itself does not escape translational processes; on the contrary, as the American semiotician Thomas Sebeok has claimed, translation ('semiosis') should be considered the very 'criterial mark of all life'. Dénes Farkas seems, instead, to keep the answer open on this point and introduces in a strategic place of his exhibition a completely foreign and undecidable body, a piece of vegetal life in a universe of inanimate linguistic and pictorial matter, and a spot of colour in a sea of black-and-white. Is this the enigmatic remainder of a place outside language and translation, the possible realm of life as self-evidence which can be experienced and exposed, but not said or explained?

**Daniele Monticelli,**  
(1970), philosopher of language and semiotician.



# Neeme Külm in abstract autarchic ambience

Johannes Saar

The installation artist Neeme Külm was awarded the Cultural Endowment annual art prize this year for his artistic achievements in 2012. This is not the first official acknowledgement for this mid-career art hero, and hopefully not the last. Year by year, he has displayed a unique competence in building bleak and uncanny environments that urgently express Marc Augé's term 'non-place', but also, in a somewhat contradictory manner, Gaston Bachelard's poetics of space. Galleries, spots in public space and suburban wastelands with an industrial past have witnessed, with a little help from Neeme, a peculiar symbiosis of these two sensations of space, which by definition would seem to cancel each other out.

To provide a face and more palpable appearance to Neeme Külm's enigmatic praxis of space building, let us recall James Turrell, Anish Kapoor, Mike Nelson and Martin Creed from the ABCs of contemporary art. Roughly speaking, all of them have addressed certain qualities missing, or should I say methodically excluded, from the public and private spheres of the capitalist *modus vivendi*. It is hard to put my finger on this particular missing quality without crowding the discussion with more names. Henri Lefebvre argues in *The Production of Space* (1974) that nowadays, i.e. the 1970s, a space "is determined economically by capital, dominated socially by the bourgeoisie,

and ruled politically by the state." The concern with space of the above-mentioned artists is primarily about dismantling the attributes of space and the very space in question itself by reappropriating it through undermining site-specific tactics. Hakim Bey has introduced the term 'temporary autonomous zone (TAZ)' to frame a kind of attempt to cut even makeshift gaps into the fabric of capitalist social order. Neeme Külm also seems to blend into the situationist company of puritan space invaders trying to detour and jam the "integrated spectacle going by the label of liberal democracy" (Guy Debord).

In clear contrast to the abundance of references in the present text, Neeme Külm radically eliminates any conceivable cultural or social gravity in his recent installation environments to provide room for genuine qualities of physical space here and now. Therefore, beyond the social functions of space, the very phenomenon of space itself is manifested in its own rights and conditions, full of its own echos, perspectives, vantage points and doubled shadows. Autarchy is the word that describes the *modus operandi* of these perceptual mirages. On 11 April 2012 he opened his solo *Pinnavirvendus* (*Shimmer on the Surface*) exhibition at the Hobusepea Gallery in Tallinn and introduced a radical rupture with reified and commodified culture for the first time in his artistic career. The revela-



Neeme Külm. *Shimmer On The Surface*. 2012. Installation. Exhibition view: *Shimmer On The Surface* at Hobusepea Gallery, Tallinn.

tion was assisted by the launch of the ponderous and ominous *Black Book*, filled only with black pages. His iconoclastic sensitivity to oppressive space policies surfaced in his installation of a genuine gas pipe between the Russian and German pavilions at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennial, testifying to state space policies ruling over environmental hazards [See more in *Estonian Art* 1/2 2008]. Yet now he has abandoned political criticism in favour of a radical Foucauldian discursive rupture, creating a threshold to perceptual integrity with our immediate surroundings. Transforming a gallery space into some kind of abstract sonic ambience is the recipe here for an escape from the integrated spectacle.

Abstract autarchic ambience (AAA) – how is it done? What is the chef's tip here? Pretty much in the manner of Hakim Bey's instructions for building TAZ, the golden rules of AAA may be the following:

1. Block the million dollar view
2. Disguise the market value of real estate involved
3. Dim the interior lights to twilight
4. Deprive the space of its routine functions
5. Add a hidden background soundscape
6. Taint anything taken for granted

Perhaps these hints are not a DIY manual for Neeme Külm's art, but they come close. The Hobusepea Gallery went all-out to host these manoeuvres, which is not to say that the gallery had a million dollars to throw away. The gallery had lost its integration to the art

world for a while, being converted to a pool of sonic and percussionist vibes, light reflections and diverted illuminations able to exist only in these designated premises. No commodity could be taken out of them for further trade in the spirit of creative industries, so dominant were these days in the culture policies of Estonia.

The end of the 2012 saw another outburst of this dissident space policy at the Gallery of Tallinn Art Hall. Under the title *Kohalolu (Being Present)*, and together with the photographer Krista Mölder, a brand new AAA was established to provide a conceptual introduction to Krista's photos on contemporary office landscapes indulging in Zen tranquility. Once again, another space was built within the premises of a gallery encouraging speculation on the conditional nature of our space sensations. It could be that space is as much narrated as staged in the common sense by liberal ideology. One need only think of such notions as market capitalization or the free flow of a labor force to realise the flexible, conventional and diffuse character of today's spacial perimeters. Why not fight it with its own medicine? Why not build, here and now, ephemeral shelters where the cannonade of liberal imperatives becomes irrelevant and disappears? Yep, let's add some smoke and mirrors on our side too. Could it be that one of these days the effect will reach much larger audiences than the award juries of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia.

**Johannes Saar**  
(1965), art critic and curator.

Neeme Külm & Krista Mölder. *Being Present*. 2012. Installation. Exhibition view: *Being Present* at the Tallinn Art Hall Gallery.



# Encyclopaedia of Erki Kasemets

Andreas Trossek



Erki Kasemets is an encyclopaedic artist. Like with Marcel Duchamp, Robert Rauschenberg and the members of Fluxus before him, it is difficult to define what his art practice actually excludes and what it does not include. In other words, the question of what Kasemets's work really focuses on could also have a rather simple and short answer: everything. This *Encyclopaedia of Erki Kasemets*, a mental category, includes more or less everything, every topic: time, space, memory, information, structures, systems etc. All projected through Erki Kasemets's personal prism, of course. However, at the level of topics, the art of Kasemets is paradoxically... nothing personal. Again: time, space, memory etc. The artist, who practically deals with everything – himself, his own personal chronology, as well as things around him – while constructing expansively growing and infinitely changing systems.

Knowing this is alas not much help to anyone experiencing Kasemets's body of works for the first time. The word 'everything' is not the key. The viewer stands, say, in the big hall of the Tallinn Art Hall in January-February 2013, at the most extensive Kasemets retrospective so far, *Spooky Days*. The viewer sees

hundreds of colourful painted cardboard milk cartons, beverage cans, CDR-type compact discs, cigarette packets, cash receipts etc. Is it a painting or a sculptural installation? The viewer can't quite decide. An art historian marches in, for example the current writer, stares intently at the viewer and announces hypnotically that Erki Kasemets deals with 'practically everything', but even that is not all: in this (creative) process based on do-it-yourself aesthetics there's also room for the viewer to participate. The art historian then half-heartedly produces some art historical parallels (*à la* Duchamp, Rauschenberg and Fluxus) to make it all sound legitimate, and leaves, as if the whole art historical mission was just to direct the viewer from the exhibition hall to the library – from an exhibition of a specific contemporary artist to the conspectuses of 20th century art in general. Revolution against *mimesis*-based aesthetics starts with the revolt of painters. At the beginning of the century, Duchamp invents the ready-made, i.e introduces the ordinary industrially produced occasional object, the urinal, into high art. In mid-century Rauschenberg develops his combines in the similar vein, mixing various found objects

Erki Kasemets. *Spooky Days*. 2013. Installation. Exhibition at the Tallinn Art Hall



and domestic trash and presenting art works as the end result, which were no longer paintings, but not yet sculptures either. Members of Fluxus, in turn, take this line to its logical extreme, promoting total democratic ‘trash art’ that flows like river water, a kind of art that could, in principle, be made by anyone, out of anything, any idea, any event. The art market and art history nevertheless painlessly swallow all provocations: at the beginning of the 21st century all of the past scandalous ready-mades, combines and fluxus boxes have become cornerstones of the permanent collections of modern art museums. Once again, revolution has eaten its own children – but at least we never had to suffer a dull moment.

Still, this art-history-centred method of explanation does not quite work, because in today’s world nobody is prepared to lis-

ten to a waffling art historian for more than two minutes. Another way must be found. Thus – from the library back to the exhibition hall. Again: painted milk cartons, beverage cans, data discs etc. Everything seems nicely systematised, everything in its place. However, against the background of all this gathered and processed matter, hovers a scary premonition: this cannot possibly be all. All this must surely be stored somewhere else, and in greater quantity; all this will surely materialise in future as well. Quite honestly, this entropy seems scary. It is too massive, too close to chaos. Erki Kasemets’s best known project so far is *LIFE-FILE*. It began in the 1980s in Estonia, USSR, continued in 1991 when Estonia regained its independence and will most likely go on until the artist’s physical death (whatever social formation forms the background). It is essentially an increasing collection. Each milk carton, painted over by the artist and bearing the date of completion, marks one day in the life of Erki Kasemets. It is quite simply a ‘diary’, i.e a ‘time machine’, which makes it possible to endlessly ‘travel’ on a personal time-scale backwards and forwards. These objects, strangely enough, do not seem personal, largely because they don’t form an articulate recording of specific events or emotions. Instead, the viewer probably wonders: “What did I do on 9 September 1989?” An impressive collection of dates and times, most certainly.



However, as everyone knows who collects coins, stamps, books, LPs, CDs, exotic insects etc, no collection is perfect. Something is always missing, something ‘essential’ must be added, without which the collection is deficient. According to pessimists, collecting is an endless source of frustration. Optimists say that collecting is a passion, but passion is just a polite euphemism for a classic addiction that restricts other life choices. If you are addicted, you have no other choice. Let’s just make this clear: no choice.

Perhaps the works of Erki Kasemets should in fact best be seen on the basis of this quantitative and not some kind of qualitative principle? The artist should be ‘read’ as a series of encyclopaedias that are constantly supplemented: a page here and a page there, but without any hope that all this will one day be properly examined (assuming, of course, that it will ever be ‘complete’). This is not just a question of individual keywords (time, space, memory etc), although these matter too, if for nothing else than from the point of view of narrative logic and the order of transmitting information. It is mostly a matter of mapping, tracking down, knowing. This is the mechanism which makes the artist Erki Kasemets ‘tick’. It is his ‘thirst’ that gets him up in the morning and does not let him fall asleep peacefully at night. He is restless, like an encyclopaedist, and so he cannot ever consider the big project finished. There are too many intervening developments, adjustments, and even

new keywords. There is so little time, and the notes may seem pathetic, although experience shows that everything can be significant, even maximally significant, although everything may also seem absolutely pointless. Just as no encyclopaedia can ever be complete and ideal, the body of work of Erki Kasemets will never be complete either. One does not have to be a clairvoyant to predict that Erki Kasemets’s work will simply remain ‘unfinished’ after certain years and decades – when his life can be summarised on one gravestone in the section of the cemetery designated for members of the Estonian Artists’ Association, and with one solemn obituary, which this time will have fixed dates.

### Andreas Trossek

(1980), art historian and critic, works as an editor in chief of *Kunst.ee* art quarterly



Jaana Kokko. Ljudmilla  
Akulina at Polymer,  
spring 2013

**AKULINA  
LJUDMILLA**  
a printmaker 14855 days  
1972 - 26

# Portrait of a woman in the post-socialist era (and some thoughts about nationalism)

Jaana Kokko

Sitting, a child asks:

What is communism?

Answer:

Communism is when you are playing with your toys and someone comes and takes your toys away.

Second child:

What is communism?

Another answer:

Communism is when you are playing with your toys and someone comes and brings her own toys and then you play together.

Later I am taught what capitalism is: Capitalism is when an invisible hand guides us all.

(Jaana Kokko: *As if it was (True)*, 2005, video 4 min 55 sec)

The extract above is from the video I made in 2005, the first art piece where I consciously started to think about our past and present as being guided by political economics. The first answer was the one I heard as a child in the 80s in eastern Finland, close to the Soviet border. As an adult I discussed this with a friend born in western Finland, whose father had given her the second answer. There is a significant political distinction as to which of the answers one gives a child.

Later I studied economics in the university, but I was not happy with the answer that the leading school, market economics, gave me. I still doubt whether the principal thought of the 'invisible hand' by Adam Smith is valid and sufficient <sup>1</sup>.

The name of the town where I grew up is Joensuu and it has around 50 000 inhabitants. As a teenager, I imagined my geographical position in my body: I still see my imaginary self standing on a map of Finland on the spot where my home town is located. My face and nose are pointed to the south, my left arm is tied to my body and I can't move the arm at all. The only movement I can make is to point my nose south or south-west.

At my grandmother's place, the Soviet border was within cycling distance. It was strictly forbidden to go to the border, and we did not even talk much about it. I felt there was something mysterious hidden beyond the no-man's land: a place where my grandmother went to sell her stockings, and bought me a

Miska-bear and once a Matushka. When I asked why the old ladies took a bus journey to the Soviet land, I got an answer: to find the missing corpses of their dead husbands who had died in the war.

If I think about my left arm, let's say the side of the communists, it is still disabled in the geographical sense. A body has its memory of the border of the political economy, just as language has its border or fence, reflected in the answers above.

I think it was not a coincidence that in the 90s my home town was filled with racism, reflected in the headlines: its international reputation was denied and cleared away in ten years. During the sixties, Joensuu took down almost all of the architecture that reminded us of the Russian era. The attitude has changed; today I hear the Russian language in Joensuu as much as I hear it in Tallinn.

Estonia was even more distant to our family, which was wounded and made bitter by the physical, emotional and geographical losses from the war. But I learned early that Estonia was not as bad as the Soviet Union. When my parents were packing their bags to take a ferry to Estonia (they did it only once), I asked to go with them. My father refused, saying: "there is nothing there for kids, only misery." I still don't know if he meant the current economical conditions in Estonia or the drunken Finns but the colour of the land of Estonia for me was light grey.

I got a souvenir, a wooden doll. A girl with blonde hair in a white dress with red ribbons in her hair. I drew a picture in my head: in this grey misery, girls my age were like the doll, blonde as wheat, wearing long white national costumes. Later I found out that the children of Estonia sang just as we did in Karelia: in a big choir under a big canvas tent that looked like the wings of a bat.

When I came to Tallinn as an art student in 1999, I felt an enormous tension between the different areas of the city, as if there were some lines that were not proper to cross. I felt the tension resonate in my body, unpleasant vibrations. Later I found out that the feeling came from the fact that some of the people spoke Russian, and some Estonian. As is common after a dictatorship, power had shifted and it had been decided that different languages belonged to different nations, even if they were located in the same spot.

In the place called Kalasadam, fishing harbour, I met a woman. She told me she was picking up bricks from the ruins of factories to build a home with her husband on the outskirts of Tallinn. I asked the woman, named Nina, to be my model. In my photographs, she is smoking a cigarette. Her hands are big and her face and body have the marks of life.

In January 2013 I started to work with this poetic encounter from 14 years ago and I went back to Kalasadam. The Soviet factories had been demolished. People were using the empty area for freetime activities, with kids and dogs and people jogging. There was a fish market, too. Soon there will be no loose dogs or children around. The city has sold the land to the private firm Pro Kapital, which plans to build 400 luxury apartments in the area.<sup>2</sup>

In March 2013 in Tallinn I met Ljudmilla Akulina, aged 58, who has worked as a printmaker for over 40 years, over 14.000 days. She uses the traditional Gutenberg method of printmaking, called letterpress, to make, for example, posters for artists having exhibitions. Nine years ago, when the printing house *Ühiselu* (Communal Life) she was working for was privatised and the system was modernised, and when Madis Mikkor had the idea to continue the work, she also left with the machines, the wooden and metal letters, and continued to work as she had done since 1972. There is not much of this kind of quality artisan work left; in Estonia she is one of the few people still working this way.<sup>3</sup>

I am doing a small research project on women living in post-socialist times. There is a nice source, the painting collections at the Kumu Art Museum, that has helped me to understand how women were portrayed in Soviet times<sup>4</sup>. But what is the portrait of a woman in the post-socialist era? What is the national costume of capitalism? How do our bodies resonate to economics? What else could there be when having an encounter with a woman?

So far, the blonde doll, the national portrait of a girl, has not appeared to me in real life, but it stays in my mind as a metaphor of a distant ideal. Today, for me, it represents the illusion of a child, and I can only find it in a fashion catalogue: pure, well-behaved and silent. A perfect model of a girl who will grow up to be a perfect consumer.

1 Sloman, John. *Economics*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, Cambridge, 1991.

2 Siib, Liina. 'Kalarand, the sea and the public interest'. Conversation with the architect Toomas Paaver. In *Estonian Art 2/2011*.

3 Kokko, Jaana. Interview with Ludmilla Akulina. Tallinn, 26.3.2013

4 Kivimaa, Katrin. *The Soviet Woman in Estonian Art*. Kumu Art Museum, Tallinn, 2010.

### Jaana Kokko

(1972), artist and PhD student based in Helsinki. Together with Johannes Saar, she curated the exhibition *Take Care – Politics of Emancipation* for the Amos Anderson Art Museum in 2010. See also [www.jaanakokko.com](http://www.jaanakokko.com)

# An aristocrat's desires are always pretty

Eero Epner

After Raoul Kurvitz's exhibition opened, the grey cardinal on the political landscape in the decisive early 1990s posted on his Facebook wall: "When Kurvitz, Urmas Muru et al carried out their performances in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it all seemed revolting rubbish and porn against the noble background of our freedom fighting. I recently went to Kumu and realised that they had often perceived the era's underlying tonality much more accurately than the heritage protection people, the Popular Front and the first constitutional government rolled into one."

The exhibition of Raoul Kurvitz at the Kumu Art Museum cannot only be regarded as what it most clearly seems to be: a collection of artworks which manifests, among other things, a flow of meanings, religious solemnity, transcendental yearnings, expressive gestures and focusing on the subject. It is 'something else' too, something that in an institutional cradle makes the first memory-political attempt to perpetuate not only the art history of the late 1980s and early 1990s, but to structure one of the most contradictory and emotional periods of Estonian history and its state of mind through the format of an art exhibition. Irrational, emotional, expressive and Dionysian phenomena are placed under the cool dissecting knife of Apollonian analysis and for the first time become history.

Raoul Kurvitz and *Group T*, which formed around him<sup>1</sup>, were a collective author and the engine of the avant-garde of the second half of the 1980s, presenting a number of ambivalent performances, installations, paintings and other projects. Kurvitz's creative activity continued, with intervals, through the end of the 1990s and is still going today. On the way, it passed through various checkpoints, such as vast installations, searching for quasi-religious experience and gradually more pulverised activity where music now dominates. Unlike two earlier personal exhibitions of Kurvitz's

contemporaries at Kumu Art Museum (Ene-Liis Semper and Jaan Toomik), the current display has a clearly retrospective emphasis, thus focusing on Kurvitz, the late 1980s avant-garde and the relevant period for the first time.

What then was the 'underlying tonality' of the era that addressed not only transitional Estonia, but any society finding itself in clear political turmoil, especially in Eastern Europe? Various things have been mentioned: enthusiasm, expectations of something new, eagerness to roll up one's sleeves, etc. In the context of Kurvitz's work, however, what seems to matter more are emotions, especially anxiety (even slight schizophrenia), a sense of apocalypse (plus the fear and excitement caused by it), but primarily the accumulation of different (positive and negative) tensions and solving these tensions through the body and corporeality. Kurvitz has thus firmly distanced himself from any wish to 'make art'; associating past performances with the concept of art was avoided, replaced by a 'pure thirst of self-expression through bodily action'. Compared with the earlier Estonian performance tradition, the forceful actions of Kurvitz and *Group T* were considerably more corporeal, expressive and even more Dionysian – if one considers various jubilant rituals taking place in society at the time (mass nocturnal singing, demonstrations, processions, etc). Kurvitz has not concealed the intense relation of his work to quasi-religious aspirations, and hence he does not differ from but resembles one of the main roots of Estonian art that had – especially in the 1980s – and has highly valued various mystical, fairy-tale, folkloristic tales and also a certain vision and shamanist touch. However, I would not go so far as to describe Kurvitz's actions in terms of being overpowered by others, sacrificing personal self and the like, all typical of religious practices (according to the participants all actions were 'more or less under control'). Kurvitz, too, has denied going along with a sense of intoxication in society, because "in blasphemous pleasure and in a reverse manner we decided to show the rulers of the collapsing empire, who in their craze of destruction were having the last orgiastic party."

How can Kurvitz's work be described outside the folds of history? On the one hand, there is certainly a subject focus (which *Group T* stressed and also denied in their manifestos), reaching extreme individualism, an almost Nietzsche-like belief in 'flame-throwing inside an individual', which 'makes everything around it sparkle a thousand times more brightly.' The unhooking from the social obligatory sense of belonging together at the time was sharp and romantic. It could also be called the pleasure of an extravagant nobleman (that among other things (again) introduced to the local public the possibility of an artist who openly discarded the standard norms, as back then the more active authors were those who preferred conformism and daily comforts). One mirror of

this attitude was a certain destructiveness, self-disregard or the surrounding illusory entirety, and being aware of one's own dark urges. The self-aggressiveness of *Group T* was part of a wider demolition job, an elaborate mixture of irony, decadence and anarchy, and evidenced a decision to postpone the emergence of fixed meanings by producing an extremely brutal, almost de Sade-like atmosphere. On the other hand, there were frequent references (occasionally almost sentimental) to the praise of existence itself. The nobleman Kurvitz can thus unite, within one work, a sense of the apocalypse and the acute presence of natural material that symbolises continuity (e.g in *Youth and Middle Age of East-European Plains*), plus an irrational animal impulse and the relevant beauty of materiality (e.g in *Sus scrofa*). He often uses elements that indicate destruction, e.g fire, while employing fragile materials, such as glass or its fragments. Although he is an architect by profession, he constructed a church made of windows that barely avoids falling apart, a personal aristocratic temple, where he, with the slightly stylised name Raoul Kurvitz, celebrates religious experience.

Although the work of Kurvitz contains strong individualism, he also constantly veers towards different quasi-religious and self-diluting gestures, especially in painting. Kurvitz found himself in a situation where the local tradition of 'picturesque painting' had exhausted itself, but painting flourished despite the dead end, producing pseudo-expressive works that relied on mythological scripts. In their forceful aspirations for the sacral, the paintings of Kurvitz, with their poetic titles, formed an altogether different chapter. His works rely on the belief that a painting is not simply a painting, but something that makes existence visible: a painting is a revelation of ontology, a sacrament of the visible, where divinity and existence in their splendour become visible. Kurvitz's fascination with religiosity is constantly traumatic, because it is hindered: in different contexts, he has talked about the 'quasiness' of his religiosity, as well as about the continuous postponement of catharsis, regarding the latter as a specifically East-European existentiality.

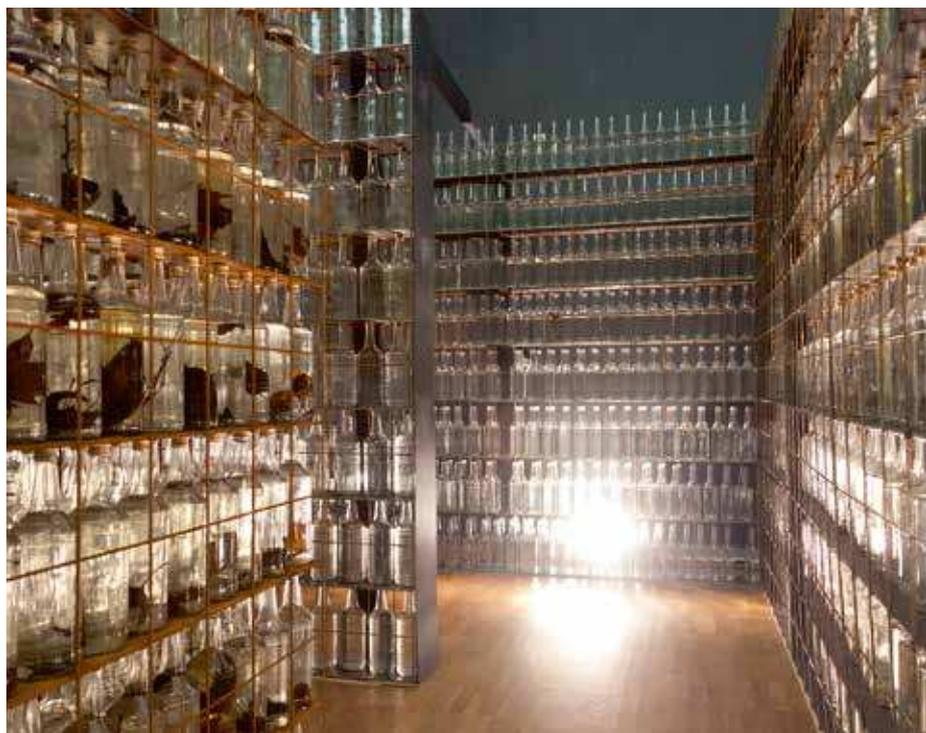
In the context of art history, Kurvitz's paintings also become fascinating through the perspective of Jacques Rancière, who thinks that existence is in the tool kit of those who mock the avant-garde. Our art history, however, is



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certain that Kurvitz's work is a major supporting pillar of the local avant-garde. Is it enough to admit that the avant-garde nature of his art is hidden in its constant moving away, non-fixedness and incompatibility (and any perpetuating exhibition is essentially against such avant-garde and not for it)? Or should we recall his wish to be a 'NON artist' and see, instead of the avant-garde, an aristocrat wandering amongst barbaric social rituals, who, walking around in the mud of pastoral contexts, tries to preserve his existential nerve? And this is not the perception of the absurdity of a small nation's existence (we shouldn't exist, but we do nevertheless), which national romantics have been recently talking about, but oscillating between a physically (bodily,



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1 Raoul Kurvitz. *Sus scrofa II*. 1996. Organic matter, wood fibreboard. 186 x 130 cm. Art Museum of Estonia

2 Raoul Kurvitz. *Maelstrom*. 1999/2013. Installation (remake). Ca 10 000 glass bottles filled with water, iron, electric light.

3 Exhibition view at the Kumu Art Museum.

4 Raoul Kurvitz. *Secondary Cultures, The Youth and the Middle Age of the East-European Plains III*. 1999/2013. Installation (remake). Nettle plants, textile, paint.

5-6 Exhibition view

7 Raoul Kurvitz. *Pentatonic Colour System*. 1994/1999, 2013. Installation (remake). 21 x Pentium 300, sound. Art Museum of Estonia

8 Raoul Kurvitz. *Palace*. 2000/2013. Installation. Glass, electric light.

1 Other members included Urmas Muru, Peeter Pere, Hasso Krull, Ene-Liis Semper etc.

## Eero Epner

(1978), art historian; dramaturg at theatre NO99.

hence an uncivilised) perceived will of life and self-destruction, supported by decadent philosophical attitudes. A constant tension emerges when you wound yourself and then beg for a religious redemptive experience. There is an admiration carried by industrial romanticism towards extra-human existence, and a seeking for flow, existence, and the opportunity to perceive God. There is the will to live of the corporeal self and, at the same time, someone keeps whispering in his ear: let go.

# Collecting that reassesses values at the 6th Tallinn Applied Art Triennial

Ketli Tiitsar

*./.../ Speaking in general terms, to collect is to place in order; to systematise and to establish control over things. Collecting can be described as an attempt to avoid chaos or to simply make the world more comprehensible and meaningful in our minds./.../*

Love Jönsson (Sweden), exhibition curator  
Excerpt from the open call to artists

## I

In November of last year, when Kristi [Paap – Ed] and I were about to display a work presented to the triennial – a jewellery series consisting of about 300 piano fragments (group A5, Sweden) – I saw it as a technical task. I was convinced that on the basis of detailed instructions prepared by the artists it would take us a maximum of two to three hours to install everything. We knew that the artists had packed every item separately and numbered them, and fixed each item's position on the 2 × 3 m wall clearly in a photograph. However, the moment I started unpacking the works, the rational part of me retreated and I stared, spellbound, at each tiny revealed detail. I was amazed by all these pieces physically, and the mastery with which every one of the best-known musical instruments in the world had been crafted by artisans. The bold and marvellous choices of jewellery made by three artists were equally impressive. All these different bits of wood, unprocessed, painted and varnished side by side, partially covered with felt and joined, spliced and screwed together, and the screws themselves, in all sizes and weights, every single one transformed into pieces of wearable jewellery by means of simple string or wire clasps. I was fascinated by the collection of details with different forms. Looking at a piano, we certainly have no inkling that they are there, but we have all heard the sounds born out of their mutual cooperation. In choosing the source body for their work, the artists found that in their home town of Stockholm it was possible to acquire an old piano at the cost of transport only. The artists stepped in before a piano was discarded and thus changed its fate, making it available and alive in a new manner, perhaps even to a totally new audience who could appreciate it in their own way.

## II

Later, when I guided tours at the exhibition, I often observed visitors' indignant reactions when I explained the background of the British artist David Clarke's work. An old silver tea set bought on E-bay, with a specially made silk-lined wooden case, into which the artist had burned holes with lead. For the artist, it was clearly a liberating act to give new life to an article that for years had been resting in its 'coffin', as it were, and because of its considerable value was unable to fulfil its original function, although it was polished until it sparkled during each pre-holiday cleaning ritual. The artist had thus irrevocably destroyed its original function and opened the work up to new meanings. For viewers, Clarke's unexpected, decisive treatment of the tea set raised many questions, primarily from the point of view of ethics and authorship. I was often asked whether the character of the work was not due to the artist's modest manual skills. I recently read that the artist had experienced similar criticism earlier in his career as well, but I would like to emphasise that he has superbly mastered the techniques for producing forms and is a much appreciated teacher in the field as well.

Exhibition view





### III

The 6th Tallinn Applied Art Triennial is over, but during the current Year of Cultural Heritage [in Estonia] the title of the triennial – *The Art of Collecting* – continues to prove its topicality, raising issues of how to interpret and maintain already existing collections, as well as possible new heritage. How collecting and everything linked with collections were regarded by the participating artists is explained in the triennial catalogue. Whatever the initial items of the artworks – old documents or photographs, porcelain or ceramics, handkerchiefs or towels, a phone book, colour pencils, bottle corks, X-ray photos, used toys, a jacket or other items – they all revealed a fascinating story, offering food for thought on several levels. The weight of the unwanted accumulation of things was the focus of many artists, expressed at the exhibition through a lot of recycling, which is quite symptomatic of the modern world. Internet-based guidance pages warn victims of collecting, and others state that nobody has the obligation to accept or preserve other people's things. It is increasingly obvious that not everyone wishes to turn his or her home into a family museum that reflects and commemorates the tastes and choices of relatives. This is exactly what the numerous pianos in Stockholm or the liberation of a tea set refer to. Items that can be significant shapers and bearers of local identity in a memory institution do not necessarily function like that, on the level of the individual.

On the day that papers were presented by triennial participants, the young German jewellery artist Deborah Rudolph told a story of how she was approached by a collector of an advanced age who was trying to find someone to leave his minerals collection to. The artist was interested, but the owner's condition was that the collection be preserved in its original form. The artist refused on the grounds that if she were not allowed to use the stones as she wished, she would not know what to do with the collection.

The aim of the triennial is not to display pretty things made during the past three years or astonish viewers with technically complicated handiwork, but to show the artists' very diverse ways of focusing on certain topics and of dealing with the practices of applied art. Among the record 515 submissions for the triennial, the jury excluded professional works which did not suit the given theme – this is the inevitable reality each time. Choices based on the curator's concept and the vision of the jury members resulted in an exhibition greatly enhanced by the vision of architects. Displaying different collections side by side in a room under heritage protection could have failed, but the architects' idea skilfully neutralised the historical spatial impact and arranged the most diverse works in a convincing kind of archive. The monumental solution focused separately on each collection and helped to emphasise it.

In the end, it took two people two days to install the A5 piano pieces, and this was just the first among many works at the triennial where I lost my sense of time when I became more familiar with them.



A5. *Aeon Profit / Piano Forte*. 2010-2012 (ongoing project). All materials taken from a functional standup piano (thread and steel used for functional solutions). Installation of 200 pieces of jewellery. 300 x 400 x 250 cm.

6th Tallinn Applied Art Triennial *The Art of Collecting*, 23 November 2012-3 February 2013. Main exhibition: *The Art of Collecting* at the Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design, 75 artists. Curated by Love Jönsson (SWE). Satellite exhibitions: *The Art of Collecting*, *The Art of Sharing* - exhibition of MA students of the Design Department at the Estonian Academy of Arts, curated by Tiina Sarapu, at the Museum of Occupations. *Corpus Container*, curator Martin Kullik (NE) - *Steinbeisser*, groups of jewellery art A5 (SWE) and *Osse!* (EE) in the Hop Gallery, Tallinn. *70 Cotton Smocks*, Marit Ilison in the staircase gallery at the Museum of Applied Art and Design. Events: seminar, artists presentation day, guided tours and workshops, educational programme. For more information: [www.trtr.ee](http://www.trtr.ee)

### Ketli Tiitsar

(1972), jewellery artist and culture manager. She graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 1995. Since 2002 she chairs the Tallinn Applied Art Triennial. She is also an active spokeswoman on contemporary jewellery art and lecturer.

## Comments on *The Art of Collecting*

- A) Impressions from the exhibition
- B) Personal collector's experience

### Katarina Meister and Lylian Meister (exhibition participants):

A) The exhibition was inspiring and had an air of liberal art; the borders of applied art were playfully fuzzy. Depending on the material, of course, always sets some limits, but it is also possible to find inspiration from this. The display in fact presented a rich variety of different visions of making art and occasional contradictory authorial positions in choosing materials/objects and techniques. The primary meaning of these choices should also appeal to a liberal artist, from Jaanus Samma's jumpers made on the basis of graffiti to Michael Strand's action of freeing the world of ugly cups. The exhibition design was a huge plus, as it afforded personal space to an enormous number of works.

B) We gather everything from impressions to occasional adverts. Textile material is mainly gathered by my mother (Lylian Meister). I gather opportunities and materials that can be put together in future: motifs and people. The current exhibition is largely composed of gathered/accumulated emotions and handkerchiefs.



Katarina Meister.  
*Folded Stories. So Sad and Blue.* 2011.  
Cotton handkerchief, painting, embroidery.  
30 x 30 cm.

### Tiina Sarapu (curator of the triennial's satellite exhibition):

A) The exhibition was fascinating and as pretty as a dense shadow garden. The theme offered by the curator initially seemed a bit too logical and lacking in intrigue. In a sense, collecting is a very ordinary activity. Gathering food supplies and knowledge in our climate has always been essential.

However, the diversity of the theme and the wealth of different viewpoints were only revealed in the joint impact of the exhibition and the catalogue. Most of all, I enjoyed the presentation day of the artists. It was amazing how passionately something was collected and how organically collecting belonged to the world of quite a few authors. On the basis of individual works at the huge display, this was occasionally not that clear.

Most of all, I liked the works where collecting was an inevitable part of a process and the result was one aspect of the essence of a particular man of a particular era, made valuable by showing and sharing (e.g Steihaug, Abe, Blank, Isupov, Patuszynska or Karinson Nilsson).

B) I have actually tried to avoid collecting. I collected stamps and pocket diaries at school. In that sense, I followed the lead of my desk-mate, who had an impressive collection of pocket diaries, acquired thanks to pen-friends abroad. One impetus at the time to start this kind of collection was fascination about everything outside the state borders, or a desire for the unattainable.

I have kept the sketches for my works. There are many completed works as well, but they live a life of their own: participating in exhibitions, or standing around doing nothing; something is occasionally sold. A sketch, however, is defenceless and fully relies on my decision to either keep a heap of papers or throw it away.

From time to time, I have been overwhelmed by a wish to live lightly and freely, renouncing everything that is not essential, e.g accumulated works or sketches for unrealised works. At some point, however, I realised that life on Earth is, after all, connected with the material and every single thing has its own time and right to exist, even if it is doing nothing. Giving things up by force and in haste does not seem right either. Collecting/accumulating can have its reason or aim, but it does not necessarily have to have it. The meaning of the phenomenon could become clear later.



Marit Ilison. *70 Cotton Smocks*. Satellite exhibition

**Marit Ilison (*70 cotton smocks*, satellite exhibition):**

A) I really liked the triennial exhibition. In the context of exhibitions, it was something fresh (for me) after a long time, something bright and pleasantly surprising that made me smile. The environment created by *3+1 Architects* under the medieval vaults was a dense, but light and cosy space where it was nice to be and observe. It was also exciting that quite a few works, including the grand prix, could easily have come from a collection of a prominent mass fashion brand or from a shop.

B) I am an avid collector, a person who jealously hangs on to everything. Besides things, I also collect memories, emotions and ideas. On the one hand, it is quite exhausting but, on the other, it creatively propels you forward and is the starting point of new ideas. In my childhood, I collected paper handkerchief wrappers and now fabrics tend to quietly accumulate, which are often so rare and fascinating that I am not bold enough to cut them.



### Kaido Ole (painter, exhibition visitor):

A) My impression of the triennial was that it was excellent. Shortly before, I had come from an exhibition of 'real art', with heaps of existential dash and pretension, which is common with this kind of art (because what else should it, poor thing, 'talk about'). To me, however, pretension often smothers impression and can even look ridiculous. Being ridiculous is not altogether bad and frequently saves the whole exhibition, although in most cases you realise that the comic side was only in your own head, and not planned by the artists. It cannot be simply explained that the art was not good enough to justify the big pretension. That is sometimes the case, but often it is a matter of examples from the very top and even then it feels really strange. At least I find it strange.

In that respect, I like it that design is still connected to the practical side of the Earth's surface by a kind of root or its remains, and even when the head rises to the clouds, I often prefer this 'plant' to achieve contact and reflection.

I probably never looked at the triennial works with the idea of how it would be possible to use them, even when they were recognisably 'practical' items. I walked around quite arrogantly, rested my eyes on everything I saw, and waited for what would happen in my head and soul. A lot happened, in fact, and I left in a superb, energetic mood.

B) I am a passionate collector, not for philosophical reasons, but just out of greed. I have always enjoyed the feeling of owning something: the better the quality and the greater the quantity, the nicer. I have an enormous need to possess, and for me there is an unfortunately distinct border between what is mine and what is not. That sounds quite unpleasant, and this sort of quirk entails a lot that is deplorable. Over the years, I have tried to employ my passion to achieve as positive results as possible. The best aspect is perhaps that if something belongs to me, or I wish it did, I am very sensitive and attentive to it (an item, phenomenon, impression, principle etc). I notice and derive much more from this type of item. Plus I can make a much bigger effort. It is precisely the key of greed that opens doors to at least part of the world, and this is not bad.

The above is one of the main reasons why I prefer, when making art, more lasting forms. Then I have an object to keep, which I can always look at later and reflect on. Then the fact of ownership is absolutely certain. Unlike with the act of possessing, my memory is rather poor and without specific 'bookmarks' I initially lose track, then interest and finally, I'm afraid, the meaning (of life).

David Clarke. *Dead on Arrival*. 2011. Sterling silver tea set and lead in a wooden presentation box. Ca 45 x 45 cm.

Pure classical collecting of course means that people want to get a complete or near-complete collection of something of which a finite number exists (all moths, all stamps with Hitler on them etc.). In this narrower sense, I probably do not collect anything. OK, I recently started up again, very carefully, with numismatics, because I had done this a long time ago at school, passionately but rather helplessly, and this failure left a thorn in my side. Still, of all my 'collections', this was realised with the least passion, and it is biding its time at the moment.



**Krista Leesi (exhibition participant):**

A) If you have won a lottery or made it through a tight competition to an exhibition, objectivity is perhaps questionable, but my impressions of *The Art of Collecting* and the relevant events were very positive.

It is especially positive that, besides the displayed works, the triennial design itself is definitely worth mentioning. At the last triennial, the cardboard box-labyrinth that filled the entire space perhaps left an even more powerful impression than the artworks themselves. This time, the mystical wooden strip-construction between the museum's medieval vaults allowed the works to speak for themselves. The solution by *3+1 Architects* was admirable, as were the superb skills and talent of the entire triennial work group. I very much hope that the triennial tradition continues: accommodating such a project is certainly an honour for the museum.

B) My personal experience with collecting is contradictory ... because there is always too little space!

I have thus decided to mainly collect memorable moments, especially from hot summer cultural tours, recorded in photographs. In fact, I am still engaged in a relevant long-term project. I include only things that can be used later... some

are gathered, for example, in a certain chandelier that quietly fills with important and less important small items in suitable colours.

Krista Leesi. *Money Laundering (Gender Equality)*. 2010. Digital print, sewing. 80 x 100 x 13 cm.



**Jaanus Samma (exhibition participant):**

A) This time, the triennial had an exciting theme which fit with the working methods of many artists. At first, I was afraid that the theme was too wide, but the exhibition had the feeling of an integral whole, and at the same time allowed the exhibits to stand out individually.

B) Collecting in a narrow sense of the term, gathering things, I must say that this hobby is not entirely unfamiliar to me, although I try to restrain myself and gather only very special objects.

Jaanus Samma. *T02.1 'Hair Sucks'*. 2012. Mohair. Knitter: Mare Tralla. Ca 60 x 60 cm.



There is an increasing number of things around us and collecting partly fulfils the function of recycling, working against excessive production. On the other hand, the passion for collecting requires more and more things, and collecting old things is after all just another form of consumption.

Compared to this, collecting graffiti, for example, is quite an innocent pastime and additionally makes you notice the surrounding environment. With my queer-themed graffiti jumpers, I try to emphasise fragments of urban space, the meaning of which changes in this context and might even work against the author's initial intention. Paying attention to a provocative scribbling on a bench can take you closer to the social unconscious of society.

# "Anu, you have Estonian eyes": the textile artist Anu Raud and the art of generalisation

Elo-Hanna Seljamaa



Anu Raud at the opening of the exhibition *Estonian Cause* at the Tallinn Art Hall in February 2013.

The retrospective of Anu Raud (b 1943), *Estonian Cause* (*Eesti asi*), opened in the Tallinn Art Hall in February 2013, just a couple of days before the 95th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia and less than three months before the artist's 70th birthday. The exhibition featured over 60 textiles from six decades, starting with Raud's 1967 graduation project for the State Art Institute. This series of blankets, rugs and curtains designed for an old country inn on the small island of Muhu contained the germs of what would become the hallmarks of Raud's work: sheep's wool as the preferred material and weaving as the preferred technique, octagrams and other elements borrowed from folk art, inspiration drawn from peripheral areas of Estonia, as well as from small details of

everyday life, the aspiration to a harmonious coexistence with nature and with previous generations, and a tasteful palette of colours, ranging from countless shades of black, white and grey to glowing reds and yellows, from purple and blue to warm browns.

The curator of *Estonian Cause* writes in the little booklet accompanying the exhibition that Anu Raud's approach to folk art differed, from the outset, from that of her supervisor Mari Adamson (1908–2000) and other textile artists educated in the interwar years. Whereas others used folk patterns to create decorative backgrounds or weaved national romantic scenes, Raud elevated folk art motifs to colourful constellations of symbols that spoke to contemporary viewers on contemporary issues – and continue to do so. As one visitor of the retrospective put it in the exhibition guestbook, a thick volume filled with words of admiration, "Anu, you have Estonian eyes." The anniversary show was a magnet for people from all walks of life, drawing thousands of viewers in just four weeks.

Seeing and letting others see with 'Estonian eyes' requires a remarkable ability to generalise. After graduating from the institute, Raud worked for several years at the recently established Association of Handicraft Masters UKU, which produced souvenirs and household items in the Estonian national style. One of her tasks as a professional artist was to travel around the country and communicate as well as consult with local craftswomen and craftsmen. In this way she got to *see* every corner of Estonia and its regional patterns. Raud pays attention to details while keeping the whole in mind. More often than not, this whole is the 'Estonian thing' or *Eesti asi*. The Estonian-language title of the retrospective referred both to material culture, i.e. objects deemed characteristic of Estonia, and to Estonia as a principle, aim and movement the artist feels a deep sense of commitment to. Raud uses folk art as a springboard to tell stories about simple things that create continuity and, especially since the late 1980s, to knit together the Estonian land,



people and the nation-state by means of familial ties. Her folk (*rahvas*) are of Estonian descent and speak the Estonian language, attend the Song Festival regularly and are rooted in the Estonian dark soil. The colour combination blue, black and white has popped up time and again in textiles of the past two decades and also predominated in the design of the exhibition booklet. Raud's representations of Estonia adorn numerous school buildings, churches and embassies – institutions that serve particular pedagogical functions or embody the Estonian state and values held to be eternal.

While Raud summons her domestic audience as the inheritors of ancestral wisdom, she also lives what she preaches. She left Tallinn nearly two decades ago to settle on her grand-

parents' farmstead in southern Estonia and has since developed it into a centre for studying and experiencing folk art. In the early 1990s, a period of harsh economic uncertainties, Raud used the money she had made from selling her works in Sweden to buy an adjacent old school building and turned it into a museum that houses her vast collection of Estonian traditional folk art, which she started while still a student. In 2009, when the Estonian National Museum celebrated its 100th anniversary, she donated the museum building and its contents to the Estonian state. She taught for over two decades at the State Art Institute/Estonian Academy of Arts and later in Viljandi, at the Estonian Native Crafts Department she helped to establish.

Exhibition view

Nowadays, one can find her students in all textile departments in Estonia. Overall, Anu Raud follows in the footsteps of her namesake Kristjan Raud (1865–1943), one of the first professional artists in Estonia, who was likewise an avid collector of folk art and a museum enthusiast, made heritage a focal point of his aesthetics and was tireless in his efforts to explain heritage to the general public. Yet Anu goes one better than Kristjan by keeping a flock of sheep that provides her with raw material for her woollen art.

However, the art of generalisation works by means of detachment. Interwoven with

One of the great contradictions inherent in the concept of heritage is that while it claims to safeguard traditions against oblivion and decay, it functions simultaneously as an agent of change and displacement. Whether a way of life, a song or a type of singing, a built environment or a festival, labelling something heritage endows it with new symbolic meanings, moral weight and economic potential. Objects considered to be a part of folk culture are likely to travel to museums and other new locations, but even if objects stay where they are, being classified as heritage tends to remove them from their ordinary contexts of



Raud's textiles in the retrospective were dozens of pairs of hand-knit gloves and mittens, as well as several woven blankets from her personal collection of material folk culture and those of others. The inclusion of these samples can be viewed as an homage to the artist's major source of inspiration and learning, as a token of partnership and recognition that goes back decades. Even so, the anonymity of authentic 'folk creations' stood in stark contrast with the brand Anu Raud, raising uncomfortable questions about power and ethics that plague contemporary scholars of folk culture. Collecting was at the centre of the Soviet-era study of folklore and ethnology and, in the case of material culture in particular, could take rather ruthless forms.

Anu Raud. *Barnhouse*. Tapestry. 2012

### Elo-Hanna Seljamaa

(1980), folklorist, PhD, researcher at the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore, University of Tartu. Current research interests include ethnicity, nationalism and multiculturalism in post-Soviet Estonia.

usage and the cycle of wear, tear and modification. Looked at from this perspective, heritage is a thoroughly modern way to relate to the past, a metacultural practice in which phenomena are turned into representations of themselves and of supposedly homogeneous imagined communities. By emphasising roots and ancestry, heritage naturalises the conditions of belonging and diverts attention away from inequalities among 'heirs', and away from contemporary issues of diversity waiting to be addressed in Estonia and elsewhere. As was implied above, there are also questions of authorship and of authority involved in speaking on somebody's behalf, in the name of the 'Estonian cause' – all very relevant in 2013, a year dedicated to cultural heritage.

# AN EDUCATION

Veronika Valk

I don't think anyone has an inkling of what architecture really entails before studying it, practising for real and starting architectural work. Besides, today's profession is not what it was twenty-odd years ago. In recent decades, the architect's job has essentially changed, not just in Estonia, but throughout Europe and the whole world. It has become more bureaucratic, and more technical in an administrative sense. However, I was charmed, and I still am, at how the architect's preparation - besides training to create spatial visions, structural thinking that has to see far ahead in time - produces a future. A bit like jujitsu, in which people face tomorrow with bare hands (and bare thoughts), their tools are spatial models and their presentations are in the form of drawings, models etc. I am especially grateful to teachers, colleagues and friends who have trusted me with their secrets of structural thinking, their tools of thought... not just to be employed in our professional work, but also to be developed further, to think further ahead. In this area, Estonian architecture has a very strong school.

RISD (the Rhode Island School of Design) demonstrated to me how everything technical related to architecture (engineering, building physics, constructions, technical systems etc) can be taught quite 'understandably', even simply and perceptively, and at the same time comprehensibly and with perfect precision, in a way easy to grasp for anybody. The Australian university RMIT (the School of Architecture and Design at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology), where I am currently doing my PhD, is remarkable because over the last 25 years it has successfully managed to blend the practical skills required in architectural work with academic 'research', doing this in a most natural and logical way, since such embedded research is an essential characteristic of architecture.

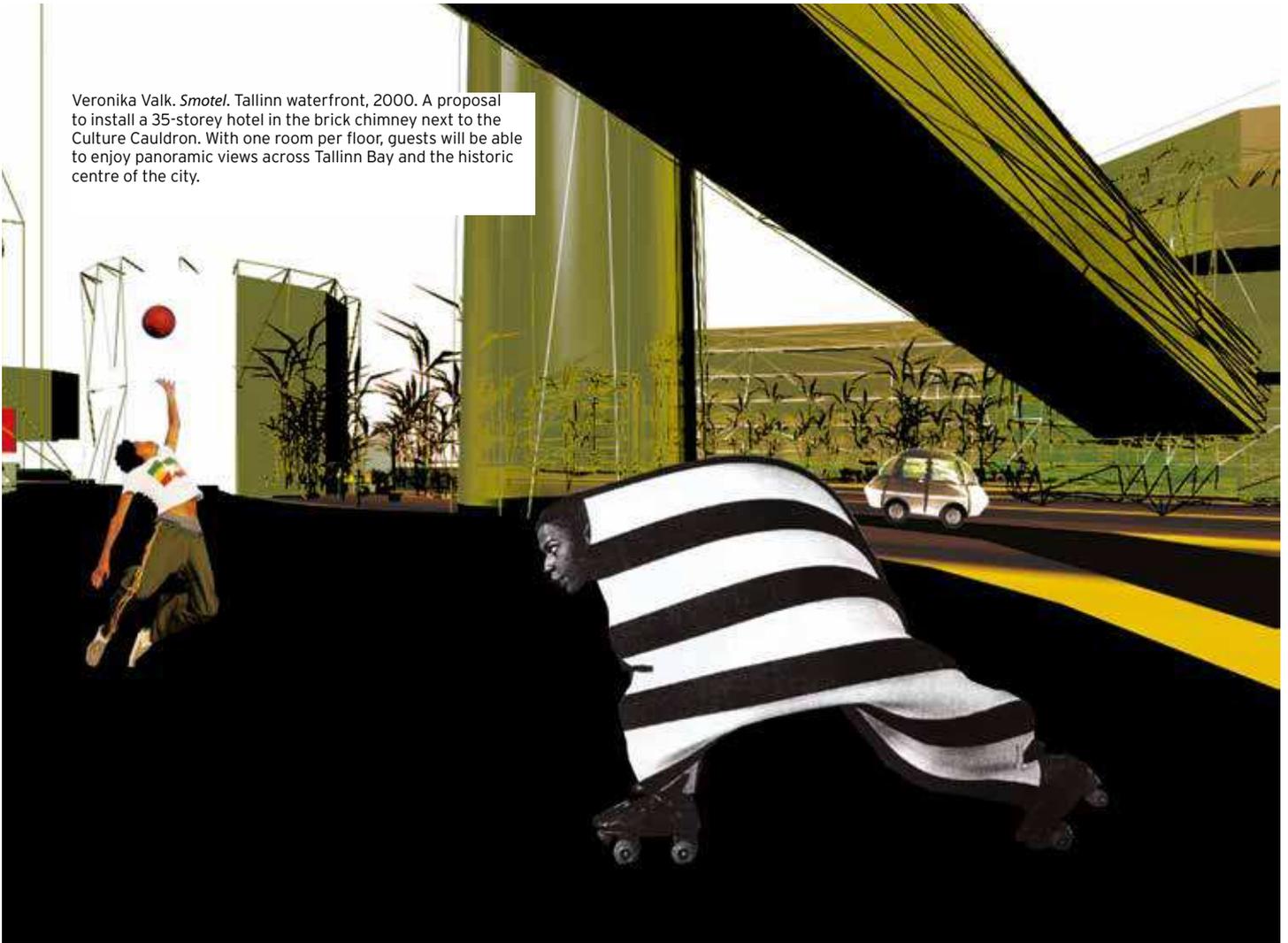
Today I am fascinated with everything going on in the area where architecture, biotechnology, energy and materials science intersect, as well as everything that has to do with our (humankind's) ability to deal with climate change, urbanization and other challenges of 'being human'. And not only deal with, but also use them in the good sense of the word, employ them in our own interests. The closest to this are the urban, 'smart city' projects, and also other installations in Tallinn, Eindhoven, Lyon and elsewhere, which unite science, engineering and art. They have enabled me to test how light, space, travel and spatial experience actually influence our physiology... As a co-editor of inclusive design guide book, I am perhaps more sensitive about topics that tackle the functioning of our living environment as a whole, both between buildings - in urban landscape and parks - and inside buildings. It is also significant how we develop infrastructure and how people move about in towns and between them. How human settlement manages itself as painlessly as possible, and at the same time creatively and happily. The experience so far has shown that an architect can deal with big issues better in the scale of a public building, hybrid research, art project or urban development.

My studies and the school have kindled my interest in social topics, issues of urban space, 'smart city', increasingly international architectural studies and everything scientific-experimental, where besides your own profession you need constructive mindset and a slice of idealistic dedication.

## Veronika Valk

(1976), studied architecture at the Estonian Academy of Arts and the Rhode Island School of Design, she is currently doing her PhD at RMIT University School of Architecture in Melbourne. She works as an architect in her practice *Zizi&Yoyo* (EE). She has constructed both public and private buildings, designed interiors and landscapes, won some 30 prizes at various competitions as well as published a number of critical essays on architecture and urbanism. She is the recipient of the Estonian Young Architect Award 2012.

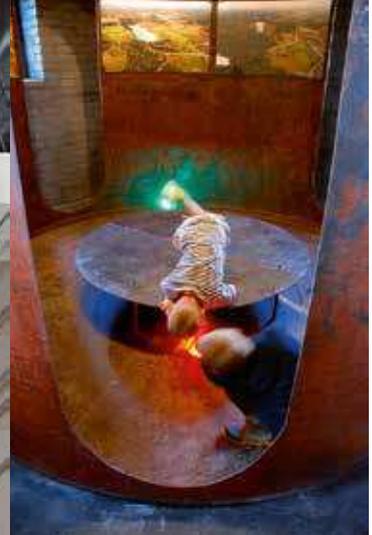
Veronika Valk. *Smotel*. Tallinn waterfront, 2000. A proposal to install a 35-storey hotel in the brick chimney next to the Culture Cauldron. With one room per floor, guests will be able to enjoy panoramic views across Tallinn Bay and the historic centre of the city.



Veronika Valk. *Kultuurtuli*. Tallinn, Estonia, 2000. Culture Cauldron is a culture hub in the former heating station between Tallinn's waterfront and the Old Town. The area was previously a military zone, but is now undergoing a vast transformation into spaces for the public. As an initiative, it sets out to catalyze the waterfront, where a multitude of facilities for arts and sciences are conceived as an open study book and learning tool, to be explored, studied and evolved over time.



Veronika Valk and Kadri Klementi (architects), Kalle-Priit Pruuden (sculptor), Kalle Tikas (sound designer), Peeter Laurits (artist). *Lasva Water Tower Conversion*. Estonia, 2006-2009. The main attraction of this building is the piano stairs, which can be played like a musical instrument and lead up to a grass roof viewing platform. This project has helped to restore and strengthen a sense of identity in this remote rural community.



Veronika Valk, Aili Vahtrapu (sculptor), Louis Dandrel (sound design). *Monument for Eduard Tubin*. Tartu, 2005. Visitors can hear fragments of Tubin's music by tapping on the gongs on the back wall, with the monument operating as an interactive soundscape installation in front of the city's main theatre.



Veronika Valk. *Swinging In The Light*. Tallinn Festival of Light, 2006. A 'hot' mobile hotel offers an open invitation to spend time outdoors despite the somewhat extreme Estonian wintertime conditions, where temperatures can fall occasionally to -35°C at night. Super-sized, insulated white hammocks, reminiscent of military blankets, are illuminated and heated further by directional infrared lamps.



Veronika Valk. *Mikrouun stage design*. Colina Lab in Kanuti Saal, Tallinn, Lyon and Cardiff, 2006-2007. The pneumatic architectural form is space for think tanks, shows, experiments, but it can also serve as a stage or urban accommodation.



Veronika Valk, Tõnis Arjus, Niek Schutter. *Catapult Tent*. City on a Roof workshop in Groenigen, the Netherlands, 2006. This lightweight mobile tent in the shape of a flower, performing as a catapult, was designed to explore the urban rooftop headroom as domain for innovation. It is about inhabiting the currently unused rooftops as an extension of the existing urban fabric. Together with the catapult structure, the team developed also an URBAN SELF HELP GUIDE on how to domesticate public space.



# Authentic deceleration - smart textiles at an exhibition

Thomas Hollstein

The impact of art is essentially dependent on the personal historical and emotional background of the artist and the beholder: 'the beauty of an artwork is in the eye of the beholder'. Creation and viewing of an artwork can be seen as a kind of communication between the artist and the viewer. In the same way as in a normal human interaction, the communication is successful, if there is a kind of resonance between the artist and the beholder via the artwork. In classical art, the 'transport media' has been in most cases a painting/picture or sculpture. The impact of this art objects on a beholder depends on the degree of resonance, which the art object can cause in the emotional sphere of the viewer. It is a kind of uni-directional communication and the impact depends on the generated 'resonance'. If the viewer doesn't find an interpretation for the artwork, this communication fails. In human interaction a communication is experienced positively, if it is bidirectional and feedback has an impact on the continuation of the dialogue (listening/sensing before speaking/acting)/.../

Some years ago, somewhere in the forest of Lahemaa Park. A young PhD candidate is sitting somewhere in the forest, fascinated by nature textures and their evolvement during the cycle of nature in the course of a year. A video camera is used to capture the textures and its slowly moving changes: from fast-paced life in Tallinn back to the quiet cycles of nature in the beloved home environment. Deceleration, inspiration.

Kärt Ojavee is doing research on smart textiles and she is fascinated by evolving alterations of nature textures, patterns and structures, and this starts to influence her creative work as an artist. She begins to create something new, a space for exploration in consonance with the artist's and the beholder's personal experience. Her creations go some steps beyond classical art: the beholder evolves into an interactive discoverer. The unifying basic principle behind the artwork of Kärt Ojavee is based on nature-inspired patterns having an aesthetic function and morphing slowly into different patterns, which depend on envi-



ronmental stimulation by the person who is currently in interaction with the art object.

In her interdisciplinary PhD work, quite a bit of research was done, understanding and bringing together different fields and creating unique interactive objects. 'Gestalt' psychology was researched in order to really meet human emotions, and learning psychology guided therapeutic application scenarios. Textile materials and patterns were evaluated and classified with respect to their impact on the human mental state. Technologies had to be researched: how the low dynamic morphing processes of nature could find a counterpart in the art object's alterable appearance: colours changing depending on external factors and stimulation mechanisms. The world of ubiquitous computing became a part of the art objects: microcontrollers, conducting fabrics and threads, luminous elements and thermo-stimulation. Since the intention was to come up with art installations and not a technology exhibition, methods for seamless and invisible technology integration had to be researched – being very much in compliance with the basic idea of ubiquitous computing of a non-disturbing support of human working and living environments. Manufacturing methods for textiles, printing and electronics integration were researched, evaluated and approved. Finally, the artist found some well-defined spots in this huge multidisciplinary realisation space where the artist's personal inspiration could become reality.

Kärt Ojavee. *UUO (Undefined Useful Objects)*. Exhibition at the Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design in 2012

Kärt Ojavee. *Photosynth*. 2012





Kärt Ojavee. *Symbiosis W*. 2012

Entering one of the exhibitions and the world of Kärt's *Undefined Useful Objects (UUO)* means leaving a highly time-regulated and noisy city environment and entering a quiet and peaceful sphere. The quiet/low dynamics of the art objects calm the exhibition visitor in the same way as he would experience somewhere in nature. The beholder is immediately included in the space spanned by the artist, dynamic and interactive nature-mimicking UUOs and himself. The exploration can start.

The *SymbiosisO* group of artefacts is intended for application in public waiting areas, homes, hospitals and modern business environments. Three-dimensional hexagonal wool patterns, inspired by observations in nature (the bio-mimicking principle) determine the character of these objects. *SymbiosisC* ('cushion') makes it possible to experience the transience of human traces in nature: in touching, the imprint of the hand remains on the object (stimulation of thermochromic colours by the warmth of the hand) and fades out over time (transience). In *SymbiosisW* ('wall-paper-like') and *SymbiosisS* ('seat'), people can experience how a local stimulation (technically realised via capacitive sensors and piezo sensors) can have an influence on the environment: a thermoelectrically stimulated pattern spreads out from the point of interaction to its environment, until it disappears slowly. This object is controlled by hidden networked microcontroller systems and the technological challenge to be solved is the integration of the heating wires close to the surface of the fabrics. *Voxel* is the most advanced family member of *SymbiosisO*: modular hexagonal cells (pixels), with local heating elements and microcontrollers can be combined into any overall shape (image grid). The excitation of these modules can be controlled from a web browser, which enables the interacting user to partially take over the artist's role and influence the resulting overall picture or even try

to send some message to other beholders.

The bio-mimicry case-study *Photosynth* is a type of wall-paper with abstract appearing/disappearing fragile plant depictions (thermochromic implementation principle), and it is controlled based on air-quality measurement. This shows the intersection of environmental conditions with nature in a way, a kind of re-interpretation of a natural process for a quite practical in-building application.

Quite different from these installations is the *Pillowhugger* family of artefacts: pillows for living rooms and educational/therapeutic purposes. The pillows depict natural textures backlit by LED with a soft and as-textile-as-possible integration of the technology (*Pillowhugger 'Lightning'*), or pillows with an integrated MP3 music player (*Pillowhugger 'Play Me'*) and soft textile control buttons or another passive variant with photochromic colour change in sunlight (UV sensitivity). The active versions allow a soft textile experience of ambient technology and outline the direction of a new class of products, providing a sense of well-being by an invisible integration of technologies, putting ubiquitous computing and technologies into friendly textile garments. This new friendliness also opens new options for therapeutic use, as researched with regard to the learning support of disabled children. But who wouldn't want to have these fashionable pillows in his living room as well? Life in the ambient intelligent space. Artefact – Creator – Beholder – the fascinating interrelation found a successful implementation and harmonises high-speed time-oriented modern life with decelerated in-between time experiences: nature view and inspiration as a therapeutic measure.

Finally, what Kärt and her teammates (Eszter Ozsvald, Alex Dodge and several other contributors) have created is a fascinating art space, a 'must see and explore' world, which decelerates, stimulates and makes curious whatever comes next.

### Thomas Hollstein,

Professor at the Department of Computer Engineering at Tallinn University of Technology. Researcher on Dependable Embedded Hardware/Software Systems and Systems-on-Chip, he received his PhD at Darmstadt University of Technology in 2000.

### Kärt Ojavee

(1982), textile designer.  
www.k-o-i.ee  
www.symbiosiso.com

Kärt Ojavee. *Lightning pillows*. 2012



# Fear of architecture

Karli Luik

Lately, I have often felt that, as an architect I would perhaps be better off living in a country not quite as liberal as Estonia. More authoritarian and totalitarian countries, in their distorted ways, might in fact understand better that space is able to relate to people, have a little impact on people, and evoke emotions. They realise that there is a difference between one environment and another, that space is significant, and that space has quality and an ability to address people. And just as any activity interprets the space where the activity occurs, space equally interprets and influences the activities that take place in it. The state is an institution that determines what is built and how. The building practices of the Estonian state could and should be a model for the private sector, but it frequently seems that Estonia is instead afraid of architects and their work.

If we wish to improve the image of architecture in today's Estonian society at the national level, any thinking in the direction I've outlined is certainly not what it takes to convince officialdom that there is a need for quality architecture. All discussions about the necessity of the institution of a state architect sooner or later end with Albert Speer, the most prominent state architect in recent history. And this reference – although indirect, presented with good humour and in passing – still discredits the profession of architect and the role of architecture in society. Without being directly formulated, architecture gives the impression of being something superfluous, something that seems to constitute someone's mysterious and cunning ideology: secret evil forces who quietly and consistently whittle money away at the state coffers, which could otherwise be used for pensions and child ben-

efits and for raising the salaries of teachers and rescue workers. In the horror of modern architecture, we have no need to look as far back as the pre-WWII era in Germany; we can, for example, look at today's Tbilisi, where Shakashvili's aspirations to bring Georgia into Europe brought about a significant invasion of modern architecture in constructing new national buildings. It is thus easy to conclude that architecture and extravagant space are used to replace democracy and an honest dialogue.

We are probably even more afraid of any repetition of Soviet modernity, as Estonia will have to sort out its dismal legacy for a long time to come. The synonym of modern architecture, after all, is still the Soviet planning strategy, and cultural buildings erected in customary Soviet quality. Some have been demolished, some function in defiance of dreadful heating costs, and some are still waiting for their destiny. For example, there is the *Linnahall* (City Concert Hall), which represented Estonia at the last Venice Architecture Biennale. It is a pompous cultural building, administered by many people in the past, including, incidentally, the current Minister of Culture, who makes decisions about tomorrow's cultural buildings. This architecturally most awarded grandiose structure, which opened up the Tallinn urban space to the sea, is desolately sitting in the harbour area, gathering graffiti and waiting for lavish investments. The idea of waking it to a new life seems completely absurd to any rational human being who has some knowledge of the current state of the building.\*

Architecture is therefore dangerous and suspicious, dubious and expensive. Today's slogan thus makes sense: let us invest less

*Memory Field.* New building of the Estonian National Museum. SARL D'Architecture Dorell Ghotmeh Tane Architectural Bureau. To be completed in 2016.



in concrete and more in people. There is no point in casting mistakes into stone, leaving them in real space for a long time and making fun of the ruler. Architecture resembles the humanities: it cannot really be measured or pigeonholed; it is subjective and thus relatively uncontrollable, something to be avoided rather than desired. Architecture leads to extra costs, both time-wise and financially, and this does not fit into the silk-thin agenda of today's government.

It is, of course, possible to measure architecture, e.g you can compare the cost of realising different solutions and the cost of energy – these are indeed significant architectural parameters – but spatial relations and the quality of the environment can only be measured qualitatively, by comparing and weighing. The state agrees to build structures that save energy, although they are more expensive to construct, but the future savings can be measured in money and written into the budget. Only a few aspects of architecture can be measured: for example, the relationship of cubature to the outer perimeter, and the relation of useful square metres to euros. In designing a public building, it is easy to total up the architects' estimates and it makes sense to pick the cheapest. The quality of a public space, however, is difficult to define and measure in terms of money. Then there is the public good, which is discussed dur-



ing planning procedures. However, as the case of the recent court dispute over turning the Tallinn Hippodrome into a commercial environment showed, the public good tends to be trumped by the equally constitutionally protected private interest, which can be measured in money.

Maybe today's political and state architecture go hand in hand: total submission to the market logic and maximum effectiveness are essentially hardly associated with the public good, a diverse environment of quality, and public urban space. Just as a state's quality is not determined by the efficiency of collecting taxes, the quality of space is not determined by the speed of movement from point A to point B. And just as the state should ensure transparency in spending tax money, the state should also be able to take on the responsibility for the quality of the environment it is constructing.

\* See more in *Estonian Art* 1/2 2012

### **Karli Luik**

(1977), MA in architecture at the Estonian Academy of Arts (2004) and MA in gender studies at Central-European University (2005), architect at *Salto Architects*.

# When EU grants are distributed the muses are silent

Piret Lindpere

Supported by EU grants, the Estonian state has kept building, feverishly and with pleasure. It has built so much that suspicions occasionally emerge as to what exactly is going on under the cover of all this construction, and how the cash is actually flowing. It also sometimes transpires that the decisions of money-distributing committees do not rely on analyses and the significance of objects, but on agreements between political parties and construction companies. Yes, Estonia is one of the most successful EU countries in using EU grants, even when the grants fund ridiculously grand projects or those with doubtful profit factors.

Urban centres have been allowed to spread, and essential new buildings are increasingly moved to the outskirts, where construction can be started more quickly and money can move more swiftly. Building big roads and multilevel intersections in random places has particularly thrived: even in the depths of the recession, the state guaranteed its participation in EU-funded projects. When EU projects disappear, Estonian road construction goes with it. Rumour has it that all this is only aimless squandering, and cash flows are firmly directed to certain people and not others.

The most expensive and most outstanding building completed by the state during Estonian independence has been the Kumu Art Museum. Its completion in 2006 was a real miracle. The museum was built at absolutely the right time: a few years later it would not have been undertaken. Just a few years later, the word 'art' and talking about it became incomprehensible and unnecessary for market liberals.

In the era of EU grants, many pretty museums have of course been built; unlike budget-constrained public buildings, these are architecturally valuable and result from international contests. Preparations for the Estonian National Museum, more expensive than Kumu by at least a quarter, have relied on the fact that construction depended on whether the EU would support the applica-

tion for 32 million euros or not. Even with the EU money included, it was still unclear where the Estonian funds would come from. The government actually knew three or four years ago that the European Commission was not going to back such an impractical building in Tartu. However, promises had been made, agreements were in place and the decision to build the museum at the expense of the state came quickly: the museum foundation will borrow money and the loan will gradually be covered out of the gambling tax. Future generations may or may not be grateful.

In the flood of EU money, educational infrastructure has grown by leaps and bounds. In the course of the past 10 years, the University of Tartu has acquired a new chemistry building accommodating several institutes, the Tartu Health Care College has a new building, new buildings for physics and a modern centre of oncology are underway, and the University of Life Sciences has renovated its main building and got a new sport centre, all in the name of 'increasing the universities' international competitiveness'. A few years ago a scandal erupted when it was discovered that the hideously expensive veterinary laboratories were standing empty and unused, as money was lacking to complete the interiors and hire staff. The obvious question arose of where to get resources to buy equipment to keep the tens of thousands of square metres functioning, plus to place doctors in the clinics (and finally patients).

All this shows the benefits that have arrived in our front yard thanks to European structural funds. However, there is a field that does share these benefits and there does not seem to be a simple situation when there is not enough for everybody. The editor-in-chief of a cultural paper says: "We have heard for 21 years how we first must get the economy going, and then we can lift education and culture to dizzying heights. I am now wondering whether our economy constitutes only of *Estonian Energy*, *Estonian Air* and building motorway junctions on village roads with EU grants." Karli Luik has written in this maga-



*Casa Nova.* Extension of the Tartu University Hospital. OÜ AW2 Arhitektid and OÜ ConArte. The project is partially financed from the European Regional Development Fund (no of project CCI 2012EE161PR001)

Tartu Health Care College. Architects Indrek Peil, Siiri Vallner / KAVAKAVA (EE). Completed in 2012.

New building of TU Baltic Film and Media School in Tallinn. Salto Architects (EE). Completed in 2012.

Extension of Heino Eller's Music School of Tartu. Project by Järve & Tuulik Architectural Bureau (EE).

Atelier Thomas Pucher (AT). *The Garden of Silence.* 1st prize in International Competition for the Tallinn Music School, Ballet School and Georg Otsa Music School in Estonia



zine: "Architecture is therefore dangerous and suspicious, dubious and expensive. Architecture resembles the humanities: it cannot really be measured or pigeonholed; it is subjective and thus relatively uncontrollable, something to be avoided rather than desired." The same emotional reaction could be expanded to the relations between politicians and cultural people. It is too easy to believe that purposefully maneuvering EU funds past the infrastructure of the arts is not merely linked with priorities of entrepreneurship and hard sciences, but is also the politicians' revenge on stubborn and arrogant creative people. The simplest way to keep artists under your thumb is to deny them something they very much want, for example art educational institutions.

Who then has been deprived of EU funding and budgetary money? Promises have been made to many; in the humanities, the only promise that has come true is the new building of the Baltic Film and Media School, which managed to prove its worth in the creative economy.

The Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre has been waiting to complete their building since 1999. The concert hall seating 500 and the black box – basic performing venues at a university focusing on the performing arts – are still unfinished. A promise to finance this from the Cultural Endowment's funding of cultural monuments was delayed and delayed until the money was redirected to the National Museum in spring 2012. Finishing the academy's concert hall complex would make it possible to optimise the joint spatial programme of the planned Tallinn Music College, the Tallinn Georg Ots Music School and the new study building of the Tallinn Ballet School. The project has

been especially unlucky. Ten years ago everybody was convinced that the new music and ballet school would be erected on the plot right in front of the academy, and the concert hall would have been shared. However, skilful property development managed to grab the land for a business and apartment block instead. The new location assigned for the joint building of the music school, music college and ballet school would produce an uncomfortable half kilometre of heavy traffic between the two music institutions. The construction of this building has been indefinitely postponed, and the Ministry of Education has pruned the project 'according to existing possibilities' so much that, in the opinion of musicians, the building in such a form would be pointless.

An extension will be built for the Tartu Music School next year, as well as a sound studio and new study classes; it will have the same sized choir and orchestra hall as in the Vanemuine concert house nearby. "We were supposed to make the building much smaller and at some point there did not seem to be any hope at all, but then the parliament allocated more money and we will be able to complete it fully," said the director happily. Young musicians are happy too, although it must be noted that not every school has such a well-placed graduate: a choral conductor who is also the deputy chairman of the parliament.

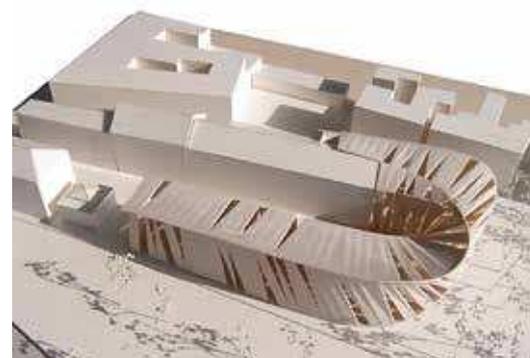
The case of the Tartu Art Museum inspires cynicism: the previous Minister of Culture, who is from Tartu, organised (before the elections) an architectural contest for the new museum building, although it was not at all certain whether and when it would be built. The successor, before any analyses had been conducted, calmly declared that a town like Tartu did not need an art museum in the first place, and the collections could be taken over by Tallinn.

There is really no point in recalling the saga around the Estonian Academy of Arts [in 2008, an international competition was organised in order to select the winning entry for a new study building; several steps were taken that changed the academy's organisational life: in 2009 and 2010 the departments moved from the old building at 1 Tartu Road into seven different locations in Tallinn and in spring-summer 2010 the old building was demolished. The new building was supposed to be constructed between 2011 and 2014, but in January 2012 the Archimedes



Foundation decided to back out of funding the project and now its realisation has been postponed to 2014–2020. See also *Estonian Art* 1/2 2008 – EdJ]. It is a true miracle that the academy is still functioning. A representative of the Ministry of Education claims that the political will exists to erect a new building for the art academy and the problem simply lies in the clash between wishes, needs and possibilities, whereas the Minister of Culture has officially distanced himself from interfering in the affairs of another ministry. The plot of land of the former academy is now a car park, the money for a new building has been scattered among other research institutions, there has been litigation, and alternative venues have been analysed. The key factor, however, is the unwillingness to think about the academy in the first place. The chief architect of Tallinn merely says: "The reason for the non-birth of the new building of the Academy of Arts was the absence of state support or, in other words, the unwillingness of the owner to erect this building".

The time will come when people wake up from the 'hangover' of EU grants. Maybe that will occur during the next EU budgetary period, and various bitter truths will be revealed, for example that the backlog in road construction has led to a situation where smaller and side roads are useless. Or it will become clear that the result of constantly ignoring art education is that no more young musicians and artists will graduate from Estonian universities, whether or not, and to what extent, the current decision-makers actually care.



*Art Plaza*. Project: New Estonian Academy of Arts building. SEA & EFFEKT Architectural Bureau (DN)

*Palimtses*. 2012. International architectural competition of the Tartu Oskar Luts Library and the Tartu Art Museum, 1st award. QP Architects (EE)

## Piret Lindpere

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Eero Epner's interview with a representative of the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research about the construction of a new building for the Estonian Academy of Arts.

Here are the replies by Mart Laidmets, the head of the Higher Education Department.

## Great Expectations



Graphic designer Mikk Heinsoo's logo as a symbol of the process of the new house of the Academy of Arts, its move and being scattered across town.

EE: Minister Jaak Aaviksoo has said that the ministry has not dealt with any other university in recent years as much as with the Estonian Academy of Arts. However, it seems pretty clear today that there is not going to be a new building for the Academy in the coming few years. What are the main reasons why the Academy is still without its own building?

ML: The whole preparatory process for construction relied too much on expectations that failed to meet the real situation; the time scale was far too optimistic, it was hoped that all relevant parties would accept the project, which did not in fact meet the planning criteria, and the financing scheme was not thoroughly considered or covered by the available resources.

EE: Does Estonia's long-term educational strategy foresee the Academy of Arts as an independent establishment or do the planned reforms intend to join the Academy with Tallinn University and thus keep only two universities in Estonia (in Tartu and Tallinn)?

ML: Adding and subtracting are not really essential in making strategic choices. The Academy of Arts as a separate university must certainly survive, although it is quite clear that in some areas we must find solutions where some activities can be transferred from other universities to the Academy of Arts. However, there are areas where it might be necessary to reach agreements in which the development of a specific field is more secure in another university or in cooperation with it.

EE: In your opinion, is there the political will in today's Estonia to build a new house for the Academy of Arts?

ML: This will has always existed, although not all plans have been in accordance with real needs and opportunities.

EE: In your personal opinion, does the Estonian Academy of Arts need a new building of its own, should this new building be in its former location, and should it be constructed according to the existing project?

ML: A new building is a must. The project has been considerably altered and, as far as I know, an agreement has been reached that the 'dirty workshops' should not be in the very city centre, because sawdust, or any other kind of dust, does not really belong in that environment, and there are ideal alternatives. To find a suitable home is certainly the task of the university itself, but various factors must be considered, such as the size of the group using the building and its income, so that the building will not be too expensive. The Ministry is always ready to help analyse choices.

Dense snow is beating against the car window, the wind is howling and pushing the car towards the edge, and there are icy bumps on the motorway, which make the car jump – a struggle to keep the car on the road. I quietly curse the car repair shop that closed at six on the dot, leaving a sad queue of drivers waiting at the door, for whom the first snow arrived unexpectedly and whose cars still had summer tyres. At moments like this, you just expect the motorway to take you quickly and safely to your destination. Luckily, there are perhaps only two or three such unpleasant moments each year.

*Art is everywhere!?*

*Motorways are planned on the basis of the Acts of Planning, Road, Traffic, Building, Public Health, Water, Earth Deposits, etc. Designing a new motorway in Estonia is a relatively infrequent task: a village detour, or access to a new harbour, enterprise, shop, quarry, waste disposal site etc. The main job is to maintain the motorways – road work has grown according to the needs of traffic.*

*Building a new motorway depends on the need, starting and finishing point, land use (private or state land), relief (hills, valleys and swamps), geology (peat/limestone/sand/clay), hydrology (rivers, lakes, groundwater and surface water), volume and composition of traffic, environmental protection (protected areas), heritage conservation, and the demands of the owners of utility networks and local governments. In this maze of wishes-requirements-orders, the contractors and designers of a project must find a compromise within the state's financial means.<sup>1</sup>*

A motorway and its elements are so pragmatic, so fixed and determined that there is no place for emotions, experiences or art. Or Estonian motorways run through breathtakingly beautiful landscapes of fields, dotted by solitary houses, many of which are in rather dismal condition. You see an occasional abandoned windmill, a derelict barn, which seem picturesque. Flocks of birds fly above the motorway and animals wander by the roadside. It makes a lovely picture, unless they dash in front of your car. The storks' nests are wonderful sights, especially in spring, when the chicks peer out from the nests. The autumn forests are joyously colourful.

A motorway is a black ribbon running through a landscape, connecting different

## Thoughts on a road about roads

Margit Mutso



places as directly as possible. It requires certain signposts and traffic signs, with precise measurements and design. There are cameras that record speeders, which startle drivers and make them curse. At some crossroads, the ribbon is disrupted by a viaduct or a bridge, mostly untouched by an architect or the pragmatic drawing of an engineer. An engineer's construction can be highly aesthetic, although this is quite rare on Estonian motorways. New village landscapes are separated from the motorway by dull traffic noise barriers, which hide houses and landscapes. In building a motorway, only the necessary work is done or, to be precise, as little as possible. It is expensive as it is.

*A motorway comes with such structures as bridges, waiting shelters, noise and other barriers – engineering structures with a certain purpose that also have to meet requirements regarding appearance. There are two possibilities that are not mutually exclusive: involving architects and designers, and training road engineers. The Road Administration has organised competitions for traffic nodes, bridges and bus pavilions, together with the Tallinn University of Applied Sciences. Study programmes for road engineers include such specialities as the landscape design of roads, the aesthetics of roads and the architecture of bridges. Instructions regarding these areas are being compiled in Estonian, but many manuals and instructions in English, Russian, Finnish, German, Swedish and Danish are available. Until their own manual is complete, the Road Administration has continued translating various foreign publications. It must be admitted, however, that road art is still in its infancy.*

Stop

On a tiring journey, a driver expects to see some signs: half the trip is done, here is a small pub and petrol station – I will make a stop, have a cup of coffee and fill up the car as well; two thirds done – I will have something to eat before getting to town... The driver's landmarks are roadside structures: places to eat, petrol stations and shops.

A roadside pub full of travellers has its very own charm, an aura different than an evening place of entertainment in a city centre. Here, people stop by, and brief encounters take place. After a long journey, especially on your own, it is nice to sit and look at a more

static picture than oncoming cars, or trees and houses zipping past, browse through a newspaper, exchange a few words with the bartender, and spend some time with others in the same room. Many frequent travellers have their favourite places for stopping and enjoying a brief coffee break, even if the trip is not too long. Sometimes when sleep threatens to overcome the driver, this is absolutely essential. The newer the motorway, the fewer opportunities to stop. There may not even be a 'forest stop' on a motorway ...

*The main aim in establishing places for stopping and resting, car parks and control squares is to ensure traffic safety, providing drivers with opportunities to rest for various periods of time (10–20 minutes, a few hours or overnight). Service is possible when enterprises are able to offer it (cafes, canteens, sanitary facilities, shops, motels etc.). The decisive factors are the number of clients and the complexity of establishing utility networks. Control squares for customs, police and border guards have special requirements. The emotional aspect of designing car parks, toilets etc. near sights is important, although traffic safety is essential as well – directing people from the motorway to a safe place!*

The motorway feeds pub-keepers and salesmen, and offers work to locals; the disappearance of a motorway near such an establishment usually leads to its closure. People going to Narva no longer pass by the Viitna pub, as a direct motorway takes them quickly to their destination. The petrol stations and eateries at the Mäo crossroads have long been forgotten. The same is true of the monument to policemen killed in action; only the locals still remember the sad incident. The former Tallinn-to-Tartu motorway sign is difficult to find even when you make a special effort. Oops! – were we supposed to turn off here? You do not get another chance. The new fast car world does not like stops. The Mäo detour is first-class, high-quality, straight, smooth and wide, 0.7 km shorter than the old motorway and it saves you 1.5 minutes. You could enjoy your coffee for 1.5 minutes longer if only this were possible. Still, a few places pop up, later. Constructing the multilevel detour cost 475 million Estonian crowns. Was it worth it?

*Profitability calculations are not really carried out afterwards without a good reason, because that is expensive. Nobody has asked for such a calculation*



*for Mäo, although such calculations were ordered by the European Commission for the even more expensive and complicated Kukruse-Jõhvi section of motorway that was completed the same year. The result was positive.*

*Amongst other things, the design stage requires a public introduction and discussion of the preliminary project, and therefore local people had a chance to examine the planned changes and make their own suggestions, some of which were taken into consideration in later work. The Road Administration has always taken into account suggestions for improving the motorway sign system, and it is still perfectly possible to visit the Viitna pub.*

### Danger

Too many people die on motorways. Motorway safety is crucial. But what is a safe motorway? Are four straight lanes, which encourage a 'heavy foot', the best possible option? Why promote racing?

The biggest percentage of motorway accidents are caused by driving off the road (24%) and collisions with an oncoming car (34%) – essentially the same accident, depending on in which direction the car veers. Then come speeding (overtaking) and tiredness. By making motorways wider, everything is done to increase speed, to make the motorway duller, to make stopping as uncomfortable as possible.

Overtaking on a four-lane motorway is less dangerous than on a two-lane motorway, but perhaps there is another, less expensive and smarter way to design a safe motorway? I have driven along three-lane motorways in the Nordic countries – the excellently sign-posted middle lane enables drivers to safely overtake, coming from one or the other direction. If, for instance, the Tartu-Tallinn motorway had been expanded by only one lane, would that have been a worse solution? For the money spent on the detour, a much longer safe section of the motorway could have been completed and the eateries on the Mäo crossroads and the petrol station would have been spared.

*The Road Administration has considered building three-lane (2+1) motorway sections, but for various reasons these plans have not been realised. The option, however, is still under consideration for both the Tallinn-Pärnu motorway and Tallinn-Tartu motorway.*

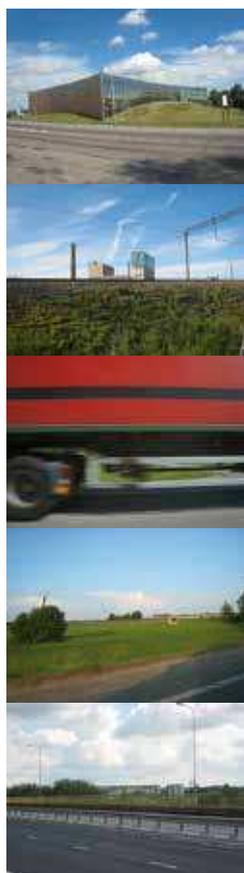
Motorway construction is not much dis-

cussed in public; it is carried out according to regulations, norms and calculations. Man as a sensate creature is forgotten, not only when planning motorways, but also when planning urban traffic. Every time I go to the Museum of Architecture, I think that the Estonian traffic planners are stuck in the past, but not far enough in the past. It would be difficult to imagine anything more inhuman than the relatively recently created junction area of Mere Avenue, Põhja Avenue, Rannamäe Road and Sadama Street. Obviously everything was done according to rules and regulations. Only the pedestrian was forgotten in this jungle.

### Motorway art

At the wheel, I often entertain myself with thoughts of what could be achieved if our miserable Percentage Law<sup>2</sup> were extended from buildings constructed by the state to motorway construction. From 1992 to 2012, 7795.9 km of motorways were constructed or improved, of which 5137.9 km are asphalt. According to the Road Administration, one kilometre of a four-lane motorway would today cost between 3.2 and 6.4 million euros, depending on the number of bridges, viaducts, culverts etc. If some mysterious power could allocate 1% for motorway art, that would considerably change the appearance of motorways. If only we could have half a per cent! Motorway art would be the field with the largest number of viewers, and this would have both emotional and practical benefits in keeping drivers alert. The Saue viaduct, for example, under which I often drive to get to Pärnu Road, could be redesigned by a theatre artist: you would suddenly find yourself driving through a grand stage portal – what an experience! At night, plays of light could be created under a bridge, something like on the Metroplaza façade in Tallinn; that would attract the driver's attention and alleviate driver fatigue. There is a place near Suurupi where a deer track crosses the Rannamõisa motorway. Many animals have been killed there and quite a few drivers have lost control of their cars. The image of an elk in a red triangle does not make drivers reduce their speed – the motorways between forests are full of such signs. But what if a large modern welded elk was commissioned from an artist which was impossible not to notice?

To design an unusual noise barrier would be the perfect task for a designer, architect or landscape architect. Unfortunately, noise



barriers are not seen as needing the help of artists. Noise is obstructed by cheap planks and standard details. The Mäo bypass has a fine noise barrier made of limestone. For the money spent on this, something splendid, and no less practical, could have been created.

In several contexts, I have recalled the works produced during the urban installation festival *LIFT11* [See more in *Estonian Art 2/2011*]. Something similar could be done for the motorways as well, perhaps a motorway installation festival MIF14. It would be possible to create something like Raul Kalvo's *Investigators* in the Lasnamäe residential area, but perhaps even bigger and using more durable material. Or, perhaps under a viaduct, something like the world's biggest wind chimes, *The Sound* in the City Hall tunnel, which consisted of 10 000 charity bells fixed to a net. Tomomi Hayashi's *To the Sea* could have a successor, *To the Field*: a viewing platform in a beautiful spot in nature above a golden cornfield.

We could fantasise for ever.

A boring journey, alas, leads to no protests or complaints.

### First impression

Designing a motorway (or rather not designing it) is not primarily a question of money; it is a way of thinking about motorways as a serious pursuit for a motorway engineer, and a bohemian touch is not appreciated. Money goes into crushed stone and asphalt, and beauty's place is in an exhibition hall.

And yet a motorway is the first impression of a country for visitors arriving by car. The first impression is one of the few things that can never be changed. It deserves thought while planning an entry to a country or a town.

A motorway includes road architecture: houses lining the road, seen at high speed. It is the common opinion that roadside architecture can be a shabby tin hangar, a squalid industrial building or a world of storehouses with filthy surroundings. A town, especially an important one, must be pretty; architecture is expected there, but otherwise entrepreneurs have a fairly free hand in building cheap rubbish and in making things worse, including ghastly tasteless advertisements.

In the last few years, I have been busy photographing entries to towns and the result is far from what you might call 'inviting'. The unchangeable first impression is quite revolt-

ing. People arriving, for example, in lovely Haapsalu are greeted by an awful Soviet-era building, with no indication whatsoever of the historical idyllic wooden town. The first instinct is to flee. Most entries to towns, however, are ruined before you even reach the town borders.

Townpeople should have greater rights to express their opinions about designing their surroundings. Rural municipalities are happy about enterprises operating on their land and filling the municipalities' pockets, but they do not take any responsibility for what kind of impressions people might get when they enter the town. Businesses naturally want to be as close to town as possible. Towns are often unconcerned about what the area outside their limits looks like. Most towns have no town architect (or the person is not properly qualified), who would be able to influence the image of the place, and thus the border areas are ruled by chaos and a sense of total indifference. No appealing 'welcome!' gates.

Entering Tallinn from the direction of Narva is so repellent that there is almost something Stalkerish about it, the aesthetics of the ugly: ugly non-designed industrial complexes, sad old high-rise buildings, with long rows of ominous rail tankers in front. There are no people walking around there.

Coming from Tartu to Tallinn, however, is quite nice: Valve Pormeister's pretty landscape-road architecture of the University of Life Sciences, which greeted the arrivals for decades, was supplemented four years ago by an attractive sports building created by *Salto Architects*. The university's sports building is among the best examples of Estonian road architecture, created specifically to be seen while driving along the motorway.

Arriving in Tallinn from Pärnu is not too bad either: there is a rather decent gate motif that welcomes arriving drivers, also showing the time and speed – excellent! However, the landscape in front of and behind the gate is random and unfortunately was not thought through. There are a few nice examples of industrial architecture: the Neiser concrete production building in Laagri by Indrek Näkk, which is too far away to be appreciated from the road, and Raivo Puusepp's DSV Transport's centre of logistics in glimmering bright colours. It is possible to play around with colours in road architecture, creating an attractive and quickly graspable architec-

ture. Alas, there are only a few good examples. Producing architecture of industrial buildings and storehouses is just as big a challenge to an architect as creating other types of buildings. It seems that architects were not deemed necessary in building many industrial complexes.

## Streets

Just like motorways, streets too have been constructed along standard lines: asphalt or one of the three concrete stones on the market, about ten cents a kerbstone, standard barriers and entry obstacles, and the usual lighting. Some fascinating pedestrian streets and squares have been built (e.g Rütli Street in Tartu, the central square in Rakvere, and the seaside promenade in Haapsalu), but these are exceptions, i.e independent art projects. In planning the common street space, the help of designers and architects is not required. The norms determine how and what.

Whether the existing street standards secure the necessary options of movement for everybody, whether it is necessary to separate the pavement with a kerbstone from the road, how to design street elements, how often people should be able to rest their feet in the street, how to bring life to streets – generally no effort is devoted to these considerations, even when there is occasionally an architectural competition. Instead of adding architecture courses at the Tallinn University of Technology, which already exist at a very high level at the Academy of Arts, the University should train street engineers who are infinitely more innovative, emphatic and creative, and ready to cooperate. Estonia desperately needs educated street designers!

The wind and blizzard have ceased, for the time being, and the snow and icy bumps have started to melt. The motorway is once again emotionless, long and boring.



- 1 Excerpts from my correspondence with the Road Administration in March 2013.
- 2 The law of commissioning artworks regulating the obligation of commissioning artworks for public buildings that aesthetically enrich the public space (passed on 17 June 2010).

## Margit Mutso

(1966), studied architecture at the Estonian Academy of Arts. Works as an architect at *Eek & Mutso* and as an architecture editor at the cultural weekly *Sirp*.

# The meaning of crossroads in Estonian folk belief

Ülo Valk

According to Oskar Loorits (1900–1961), the classic of research into folk belief, Estonians have always considered roads to be dangerous. When a traveller found himself on the path of spirits, the devil, the Old Nick or other supernatural creatures, he invariably lost his way and had to face uncomfortable situations. Belief-related tales of supernatural experiences on the road occur throughout history. The 19th century described ghostly carriages that raced along major roads at night and scared people; post-war horror stories included black lorries used for human-hunting by demonic strangers; today there is talk of mysterious cars which suddenly appear on dark roads with the screeching of tyres and then vanish into the night. It has always happened that someone setting out on a journey along a road has disappeared without a trace.

In the beliefs of settled peoples, longer journeys are associated with a sense of fear and danger, which they try to overcome with various customs. Slavery supported permanent settlement and the kind of work and undertakings that did not take people far from home. Monotonous everyday life was enlivened by journeys undertaken in fairy-tales and the fantasies of runic songs, where the hero has adventures in distant lands and foreign kingdoms. When a heroine sets out, for example to look for her lost husband, her journey is often full of suffering and mishaps. Folklore confirmed gender roles, where a woman was more trapped at home, whereas a man could travel around more freely. At the end of the 19th century the social situation changed; the developing urbanisation, improved economic conditions and a school system, as well as an increase in Estonians' wealth, made life move faster. New contacts were established and a national movement got under way, which amongst other things was evident in the traffic on Estonian roads. However, the Estonian folklore of the late 19th century and early 20th century reveals a world of settled country people, who knew their home surroundings to the last detail, but whose insecurity grew when they had to leave familiar grounds.

/.../ Any longer journey was connected with dangers that required preparation well in advance. People knew various magic and religious rituals which were supposed to help them return home safely. Silver and salt have been extensively used in Estonian folk belief to defend against evil forces, and it is not surprising that these substances also occur in preparations for a journey.

A silver coin was put into water when men washed, which was supposed to protect them while travelling.

E 76706 (4) < Tartu (1931)<sup>1</sup>

Before someone set off on a journey, he put some salt inside his gloves and walked three times around his house, so he would return home safely.

E 32483 (46) < Jämaja (1897)

Before starting on your journey, draw a cross with your left foot in front of the horse, and no accident will happen to you on your way.

H I 4, 42 (8) < Jõelähtme (1877)

The sign of the cross was a popular Christian means of protection in Estonian folk belief.

Various unwritten laws, customs and habits were also associated with a journey, which shows that Estonians used to pay attention to many details that modern people would not even notice. In the magical perception of the world, everything is connected with everything else and careless actions can lead to unwelcome results, even disasters:

**You must not walk in wheel tracks: whoever does that causes the death of his mother and father, because you are walking on your ancestors' eyes.**

RKM II 37, 335 (16) < Tallinn (1949)

**When two people walk on a road, one must not pass on the other side of a tree or a post, as they will then have a falling out.**

ERA II 1, 232 (2) < Helme (1928)

Because of its ambivalent meaning, the crossroads in Estonian folk belief can be compared with such religiously significant places as the sauna, cemetery or sacred grove. Many supernatural things could happen there, especially when people broke the usual norms of behaviour. One had to be especially careful at a crossroads:

**No one dares stop at a crossroads on a Thursday evening – least of all at the hour of 'ghosts' (midnight), as the Old Devil himself might appear in a whirl of wind. For that reason many people are afraid to walk the road at night.**

EKnS 37, 18 < ? (1906)

Matthias Johann Eisen (1857–1934), the tireless collector of Estonian folklore and one of the initiators of scholarly research on folk belief, tackled the meaning of the crossroads in his study *The Offerings of Ancestors* (1996; 1st edition 1920). He wrote that regarding crossroads as sacred did not reach back into the pagan period, but “it must be certainly seen as dating to the Catholic era. The Church of Rome saw the cross as holy everywhere. As a crossroads also has the shape of a cross, the monks and priests pointed this out to people”.

Eisen, well-versed in Estonian heritage, was however mistaken here, as it is unlikely that the crossroads acquired its religious sig-

nificance only in the context of Christianity. Martin Puhvel, an Estonian folklorist and literary scholar working in Canada, published a monograph in English entitled *The Crossroads In Folklore And Myth* (1989). It shows the worldwide spread of the theme, not at all limited to Christian culture. He wrote: “In the folklore of many countries, crossroads are associated with various appearances and mischief of mostly scary ghosts, witches and demons. Mystical supernatural phenomena occur at crossroads and all manner of magic rites are carried out. It was an old custom to bury suicides there.” Crossroads are sacred places, where small sanctuaries are set up in many cultures: stupas in Buddhist countries, and crucifixes and figures of the Virgin Mary in Catholic countries. Ferdinand Johann Wiedemann (1805–1887) wrote that when Estonians came to a crossroads in the morning, they had the habit of crossing themselves and saying “God the father, dear Son, Holy Spirit”, so that the devil would not stop the traveller and his horse.

According to Martin Puhvel, the historical and psychological beliefs and fears linked with crossroads rest on ignorance and a sense of confusion about what might happen to someone at a crossroads. The possibility of making a mistake was huge and much depended on making the right choice.

The following belief shows that finding the right way could be quite straightforward:

**When the road forks and you are in doubt as to which road is the right one, spit in your palm and slap it with the index finger of your other hand. Follow the direction where most spit splashes.**

ERA II 9, 37 (12) < Käina (1928)

Since the crossroads was a magical place, it was possible to get in touch with demonic powers, practise witchcraft and predict the future, the latter being especially successful on New Year's Eve:

**On the night of the new year, girls brought some snow from a crossroads, and when it melted they checked to see how pure it was; if it was pure, the coming year would be good, and if it was dirty and soiled, the year would be bad.**

ERA II 31, 380 (167) < Märjamaa (1930)

[In the new year] people go to a crossroads and listen; whoever hears the rattle of wooden boards will die.

E 71381 (10) < Tartu < Kursi (1930)

The devil himself was called on at crossroads and contracts were signed with him there, even if only to make a *kratt*, a demon who stole and brought food, money and other worldly goods to its maker and owner, thus making you rich at the expense of other people:

To make a *kratt*, you went to the crossroads on three Thursdays and gave three drops of blood from your index finger to the devil. After you had given the blood, you were in his power, and when you died nothing remained of you but three drops of blood.

RKM II 363, 342/3 (12) < Otepää (1982)

If anyone wanted to call the devil, a crossroads at night was the best place in Estonian folk religion. Unexpected and unwelcome encounters with the Prince of Darkness often occurred on the road. The devil was occasionally in a terrible hurry, racing to claim the soul of a suicide or another sinner, but he would still stop his carriage, and invite the traveller to come aboard to ease his journey. Although sometimes the traveller escaped from the encounter with the devil unharmed, such incidents were still mostly unpleasant and dangerous. Many tales link beliefs with the social environment via specific witnesses and their friends who convey the experience of others. The tale below suggests that the appearance of devils on the road between pubs is not coincidental. Vodka, pubs and drunks are frequent motifs in Estonian devil folklore. This might explain the case where a traveller cleverly gets rid of his unwelcome travelling companions:

Ado Kanson from the Valtu district in Rapla parish told this story: a man from Valtu was returning from Tallinn, with a sack of salt in his cart. It was autumn, the roads were dismal and the horse was tired. They came to the road between the Selikivi and Hagudi pubs. The horse suddenly slowed down, seemingly out of breath. The man wondered what it was that required so much effort. As it was night, he thought this could be the old devil. The way to

find out was to look under the horse-collar strap. So he did and saw a whole array of little horned creatures there. The man recited the Lord's Prayer, and the creatures vanished.

ERA II 167, 512/ 3 (36) < Tallinn < Rapla (1937)

Much could happen while travelling along roads. People could get hopelessly lost, they could encounter crooks and robbers, and also face supernatural strangers. The excitement, anxiety and fear expressed in many tales can be linked to the emotions experienced by a traveller of long ago who was out and about late in the evening or at night, whose spirit was ready for anything unexpected. The traveller knew he had abandoned the secure home territory and was moving through an alien one. This ambiguous state placed him between the earthly and supernatural reality, and he could count himself lucky if he reached his destination without wandering into a mysterious space revealed in the ghostly darkness of the night. A door into this kind of mystical world opens up the genre of legends; a few examples have been given in the current article. For today's Estonians, the door is basically closed, as a few examples of such tales are unable to bring to life all the images and encourage associations hidden in old texts. After all, these possible associations and images have largely been forgotten, and the paths of religious thinking are overgrown. However, anyone interested enough to explore can find a fascinating world, where the roads walked in reality lead us into supernatural places and then return us to our earthly reality.



The most important junction in central Estonia - the Mäo detour.

1 All references are to the collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives in the Estonian Literary Museum in Tartu. If possible, I have noted the year and parish it came from.

## Ülo Valk

(1962), Estonian philologist and folklorist, PhD. Since 1995 chair of the Estonian language and comparative folklore at the University of Tartu.

# Between the cult of speed and scenery

Katrin Koov

Some examples from Norway, where top architects are invited to design road pockets.  
Askvågen viewing platform by 3RW Arkitekter & Smedsvig Landskap AS

New roads produce anonymity and deprive landscape of its character. The roads are cut straight through forests and marshlands, without any sensitivity to landscapes that flick past the window. As the speed limit on first-class roads is at least 90 km/h and in many sections 110 km/h, the driver's visual view narrows and focuses on the strip of road itself. The result is a kind of tunnel, where it does not really matter whether the tunnel walls are green, red or black, or how they have been designed in the first place. The aim is just 'the light at the end of the tunnel', i.e. the destination. Enjoying the process of being on the road is replaced by the pure pleasure of speed, which increasingly seems to be one of the main aims. Distances between places in relative space-time have become much shorter, and will eventually totally disappear in virtual space. However, in order to get from one place to another, some physical obstacles on the road must still be considered. The question often arises while travelling of whether the tunnel-like road corridor can be imagined as more scenic? Is it possible to dissolve the distinct boundary between the road and landscape, make the road both visually and functionally user-friendlier (e.g. by cutting the journey into segments, or providing comfortable places for stopping and viewing), as well as culturally more informative, the road could refer to the surrounding landscape.

The Estonian settlement is very sparse – travelling along a newer road it is easy to imagine that people have totally abandoned the country. About one hundred years ago, Estonians were definitely country people, including from the point of those who travelled on the roads, whereas it is now quite clear that Estonians have become full-fledged urban inhabitants, who occasionally regard themselves as forest people, but only at high speed and through the windscreen. During the national-romantic awakening period, Estonians saw fertile farming landscapes as the foundation of their identity, but now it seems that on the road we prefer to see forests and marshlands devoid of people flitting past.

The special positive feature of the Estonian road network is the survival of old trading roads and their active usage, much longer than elsewhere in Western countries. The coastal and interurban trading and postal roads are still being used, although mostly as connections of local importance. Those who enjoy meaningful landscapes and the process of movement prefer these daydreaming small village roads, where



roads snake along through landscapes and link villages into one whole. The ancient roads along higher moraines and eskers, between bogs, along dunes, klint edges and seashores, and over hills reveal landscapes and help to understand the patterns of how and where settlements emerged. A road as a linking landscape element has never been an aim in itself, but a means to get somewhere. However, some roads later became surprise aims that were more firmly written into the landscape, so that they could be read and interpreted later (e.g. the old postal road in Põlva County).

Still, it would be unfair to describe new roads only in the negative. A good example is the extension of Pärnu Road. A few years ago a lot of brushwood was cleared from the roadside and thus diverse landscapes were opened up, which had previously been hidden by an even mass of 'bushes'. When a road is being constructed, it is always interesting to see what will be discovered 'behind the curtains'. Good road construction practice, of course, deals with this consciously; with a worse practice, we just have to hope that surprises revealed during the opening up of landscapes are mainly positive.

It is interesting and rather instructive to take a look at the practices in the Nordic countries and Britain, where new roads are designed from the start with the participation of landscape architects: from planning the

Vedahaugane at Aurlandsfjellet by LJB AS



Torvdalshalsen at Lofoten Islands by 70°N Arkitektur

roads to their final design, including various environmental issues (e.g the collecting and purification of water, and muffling noise), but also social and cultural aspects (e.g visual contact between villages and smooth pedestrian connections, and historical landmarks). The main purpose of the Highways Agency in England, for example, is to minimise the damaging effect of the road network on the landscape; it can also be defined as road construction that supports landscape. As much as possible, the Agency takes into consideration the qualities of landscape, especially in ‘remarkably beautiful areas’, carefully examines the landscape forms and structures of settlements before selecting the route of a road, designs the roads so that they do not block the views of settlements and so that they preserve significant landmarks, emphasise the typical features of cultural landscapes, protect wild nature, etc. And when we look at the pictorial examples added to the instructions, we can clearly see that it is possible to make motorways diverse and attractive. It is interesting to note here that the fastest and safest road is not straight and horizontal, but smoothly winding and following the relief, i.e a road that keeps the senses alert and forces the driver to take notice of the surroundings.

A dozen years ago we had an experimental workshop at the academy [Estonian Academy of Arts – Ed] where a group of students tried to invent solutions to tackle the ignorance of new roads by means of land art or landscape architecture. The experiment produced fascinating results. Some suggested projecting the cultural density of landscape onto the road: interesting objects/places located some distance from the road are reflected in the middle of the road, between the two directions of traffic, as ‘excitement indicators’, where more intense areas are expressed as denser patterns and calmer areas as sparser patterns, in the form of greenery or light-

ing, etc. Another idea was to frame remarkable views at roadside pockets, something that is now happening on Norwegian coastal roads, which has made there road tourism even more popular than before. Rest areas are definitely niches that need to be improved on Estonian roads as well. This could start with simple roadside pockets, which could be solved more effectively by placing them a bit further off noisy roads, integrating with the surrounding landscape, and providing them with functionally designed furniture, thus making stopping there a pleasant experience. Other places require more specific solutions, where the singularity of landscape can be emphasised by site-specific architectural means. Examining positive examples from across the world, it is clear that involving architects, designers and landscape architects in engineering projects definitely pays off in a wider cultural context, considering the modest cost of hiring these experts.

### **Katrin Koov**

(1973), graduated as an architect from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 1997 and furthered her studies in 1998 in landscape architecture at Larenstein international university in Holland. Shareholder and architect at *KAVAKAVA Architects*, chair of landscape architecture at the Estonian Academy of Arts. In 2011 co-curated the first Tallinn architecture biennial *TAB*.

# The seer meets the maker

Excerpt from a talk (15.03.13) between Arne Maasik and the New York architect Giuseppe Provenzano, the curator of *Limen*, the latest photography exhibition by Maasik in 2012 in Tallinn.

Arne Maasik (AM): You've begun to make a name for yourself in Estonia with new ideas you've shared here through articles, interviews and your work. Instead of adding more to that, I think I will go back to something you told me many years ago, when we first met. You said that you liked to be where stuff happened, or things were changing. You've lived, worked and taught in many countries across four continents so as to always be at that crossing point where the next train would pass. Now you live in Tallinn. Do you think the next train will pass through here, where do you think it's going, and have you ever missed a connection?

Giuseppe Provenzano (GP): The way you framed this question is a great way to understand your work. How you frame it, the angles you choose, how far to move in or stand back from your subject so as to offer with your gaze a peek into the world that, despite being your own view, also offers the viewer an accurate view of that same reality. I think this quality is not very common. In my opinion, it encapsulates what distinguishes you and your art in the art world. It is this ability to filter tons of unneeded details, to percolate, and to arrive at this concentrated matter like a cup of superb coffee.

AM: Perhaps, yes, but you did not answer the question.

GP: The first time I came to Estonia, seven years ago, I experienced this as a place teeter-

ing on the brink of change. Just a feeling, but I could smell the unmistakable scent only an invigorating promise of the new has. In the past, if I knew about a train coming, I always tried to be there not to miss the connection. I confess this is a moot point though, since a few times I was run over by that train too. However, the important thing is to be there where something is happening and, most of the time, I have been. So yes, it still feels like a



train will pass through here. Where it's going isn't important. The important thing is not to miss it. Then, if I don't like where it's going I can always get off. To a degree, *Limen* was a little bit like that, wouldn't you say?

AM: Yes. *Limen* gave me the feeling that I needed to push my work to pass an important

Arne Maasik. *Limen*. 2012

test. Two years ago I discovered this building in the middle of nowhere while working on a different assignment. I instantly knew something had to happen. I went back to visit it many times after that and photographed it in many different light conditions: day, night, summer, winter etc. When Parikaste Maja [Parikas' House, an artists' run space in Tallinn – Ed] asked me to do a show, I knew exactly what it would be. The big test was to

space, the constant mutations of this light and how it changes our perception of the space. Spaces that work well are designed with these aspects in mind. We cannot fully know what the building in *Limen* was designed for, but what we can say is that in spite of its simplicity a thorough experience of the light and space qualities in it could only have been achieved with many visits, over a long time span. *Limen* worked so well because it resulted directly

from your cumulative experience. First and foremost, architecture is experience. Historically too, it has been the movement of the body through space that has provided the real dimension of architecture. Spatial perception changes with this movement. This is an extremely important concept that's impossible to photograph. Making this statement while talking about a photography exhibition is a paradox. However, *Limen* also worked because it represented a threshold. Each photograph is, in fact, a threshold. The wonderful intuition was to allow the threshold points in the building to find the camera. Only then this most impossible of tasks could return such an authentic experience of this building. This becomes apparent once you start to move in the gallery space. It's rather surreal how the space of that ancient building far away can be felt by moving through the gallery's halls. It's a major achievement.

Many visitors to the show, in fact, initially thought the photographs represented the very space in which they stood, the gallery space. Remarkable.

AM: Exactly. These aspects are forever present in my work. I grappled with the hierarchy between space, light and materials for a long time in the early years of my professional life

see how the big leap from my previous work, which *Limen* represents, would hold. Judging from how well the show was embraced by the local public and the attention it received internationally we passed the test successfully.

GP: To identify successful buildings, two aspects play a key role: light and space. The way natural light enters a building and fills its





as an architect. As a photographer, though, I was able to free myself of all superimposed structures. I can now work with those aspects more freely. Space stimulates imagination. It contains light. You can play with light in space however you please, with the help of materials that are around and the ways they react to light. This is easy to understand for natural light, but it's the same for artificial light. I've always been fascinated by how the quality of light can dramatically change how we perceive the space that contains it. I find the works of architecture of the undergrounds in New York and Moscow to be impressive, or such libraries as the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.

GP: Louis Kahn, who did superb library design, used to say that architecture doesn't exist. What exists is the work of architecture. He meant that a work of architecture makes the realm of abstract ideas concrete and, in doing so, it becomes richer and more profound. The work of architecture is therefore the only entity that can speak of architecture. When all is said and done, this was true for *Limen* too. Those photographs in that gallery were the only ones that could really talk about the limina, the thresholds the camera had captured. *Limen* was a sensory experience and the way people reacted to it was testimony to that.

AM: You are spot on and, yes, the reaction of those who saw *Limen* at the inauguration was truly memorable. You reminded me of something I once heard Peter Eisenman say. He was talking about a lesson he got from his teacher, the great Colin Rowe. They were in Italy to see the works of Serlio, Vignola and Palladio. As they stood by the buildings, Rowe asked him to say what he saw and, most importantly, what he didn't see. Eisenman says that's how he learnt that architects see what isn't there. The

importance of those architects lies more in what they did not express architecturally than in what they did. When *Limen* materialised the way it did, I was stunned. To feel so close to the statements it was making was exciting and very humbling.

GP: Jeff Wall talks about a phenomenon of unity in a work, something about how it might be experienced as a unity, even if, when you look at it closely, it may hint at its own contingencies. This moment of experiencing the work's unity is important. It is always there when we experience good art, even if we're faced with a work that rejects the idea of unity, as in radical avant-garde art. Thus, the unity of a good work of art is an unavoidable moment of making and experiencing it. I think we have this unity in *Limen*. But Wall also said that the mere experience of a work of art changes people and their personal way of seeing things. So do you think we have all been changed by the experience of *Limen*?

AM: Undoubtedly. All art can change people, their minds; at least, it affects the mind. Photography, film, architecture, all art changes us. I'm sure. It's the story of my life.

/.../

*Limen* is often likened to a thin line where everything is white on one side and black on the other, with no shades of grey. The agony of the 'here and now' placed against the dream of the 'there and then'. It embodies both the promise and the allure of what is hidden and immanent and its potential to disclose and become manifest, not without a daunting fear of the unknown. It's a limbo we are describing or, as some have called it in the past, a living, infernal nightmare. Another stare, then, unexpectedly, into the span of an instant that tends to infinity, and that thin line expands into a new space, into an escape.

/.../

## Giuseppe Provenzano,

founder of *Studio di Composizione* (worldwide laboratory and observatory for architecture, art and design) in 1988 in his native New York. Has taught and practiced in the USA, Canada, Europe, Japan and New Zealand, currently working from his Tallinn base.

## Arne Maasik

(1971), architect and artist, graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts with an MA in architecture. Has worked as an architect at the architectural firm of *Künnapu & Padrik* and as the creative director of the photography agency *Zepp Grafelin*. As of 2007, founder and owner of the photography agency *Decadency*.

See also: [www.arnemaasik.org/limen](http://www.arnemaasik.org/limen)

# The art of living

Jan Kaus

Niguliste (St Nicholas Museum and former church) in the Old Town of Tallinn is a strange place that brings to mind the dispute over the history of the Estonian people. Does the history

of Estonians constitute a story of suffering or of survival? Should we define being Estonian through fierce battles of the past, slavery and occupations, or the fact that the Estonian people have emerged from various bottlenecks and needle-eyes intact, with their own language and country? Visiting Niguliste Church always nudges me towards the latter attitude. This building has repeatedly felt the random grinding of the teeth of history. The church was destroyed in WW II, although its main attractions survived, such as late 15th century works made in the workshops of the Lübeck masters Hermen Rode and Bernt Notke: a high double-winged altarpiece and *Danse Macabre* (Dance of Death), respectively. There was a plan after the war to demolish the church. When it was being restored shortly before Estonia regained independence, yet another fire broke out in the tower. Rode's altarpiece was taken to Russia for restoration, but Russia refused to return it to free Estonia, and so a few enterprising people brought the unique piece of art back secretly.

Standing under the main nave in Niguliste, one can see the whole essence of Estonian history. The grand medieval artworks are surrounded by a meaningful void: places once filled with art destroyed in wars and fires. The church has suffered a lot. Still, it is standing, light pours in through its windows, majestically and softly. Niguliste Church embodies the history of survival.

How is all this connected with the exhibition in Niguliste, *Ars Moriendi – The Art of Dying*? The curator Merike Kurisoo told me how she tried to link the exhibition with the permanent museum display and the surrounding space. It is significant that the 'crown jewels' of the Niguliste Museum – the above-mentioned Hermen Rode's altar and Bernt Notke's *Danse Macabre* – also deal with the intertwining of life and death, although they are not actively connected with the exhibition. One reason, according to Kurisoo, is that *Danse Macabre* would most certainly need a separate treatment. On the other hand, it was the church – and in a sense still is – where life and death come close to one another, where the living have to take a peep across the threshold of our daily existence. The exhibition thus has a powerful and congenial background from the start, another plane, a kind of stage depth.

The exhibition explains that, both in the Middle Ages and later, man's relationship with death was totally different from what it is now. Death was much more tightly connected with life, although this relationship began gradually changing, as death moved further from life. It is strange that although the exhibition does not emphasise the differences between the Middle Ages and today, a contrast still emerges



Tobias Heintze.  
*Johann Müller's Epitaph*.  
1637, destroyed 1944.  
St Nicholas' Church  
in Tallinn.



with our present day, when death is no longer a life event for many people. It is quite meaningful that in the medieval times people were not in most cases buried in coffins, but were wrapped in simple shrouds. With the arrival of Protestantism, funerals became grander, and more coffins were used. A coffin is the first wall between the living and the dead. The Estonian language uses the word *puusärk* (wooden shirt) for coffin, which describes the coffin as the last garment, although it is like a small windowless house where the dead person is concealed. The physical distancing of the dead from the living is also symbolic. In *The Art of Dying*, the custom of burying the dead underneath the church floor, also practised in Niguliste, is pointed out. It's true that the dead were taken to church yards primarily for hygienic, and not for ontological reasons. Today, cemeteries have more or less moved out of city centres, forming half-hidden cities of the dead within cities of the living, separated by walls. Dying itself has changed as well – one of the most telling motifs of the exhibition is the dying person, surrounded by people, who receives extreme unction and confession inside the walls of his home. The medieval art of dying was therefore part of the art of living. *Memento mori!* was perhaps just as popular an idea at the time as today's imperative of originality, introduced by advertising and TV shows. Johannes Ballivi's gravestone from 1520 – a few years before the arrival of Protestantism in Estonia – depicts a skeleton on a death mat. The living thus not only came to the grave to remember the dead, but also to face their own destiny, as it were.

Death. 1666. Narva Museum

Exhibition view. Stone Cross. 1612. Tallinn City Museum

Exhibition view. Coffin planks (17th century) and metal coffin (18th century). Tallinn Cathedral

Tombstone of Johannes Ballivi. Ca 1520. Art Museum of Estonia

Mourning Button. 18th century. Estonian History Museum



All this may well seem too grim in an era when death has been pushed to the margins of life, and it has thus become not part of life, but its opposite. It is possible to claim that Christianity is essentially morbid, and it is somewhat logical that one of the leading motifs of the 'Art of Dying' is the Crucifixion of Christ. On the other hand, from the empiricist point of view it might seem strange that in the medieval mindset death signified, in a sense, the beginning of real life, a gate into immortality. Death was not the end of life, but the beginning – which can be seen as reflecting the Platonic idea of physical life as a game of shadows, a kind of unreality. Nowadays, it seems more logical to claim that outside society's cave walls, only the cosmic void dominates. However, if we blame the old world perception of excessive clinging to death and morbidity, and on the other hand unrealistic expectations about death, a contradiction emerges, based on the contemporary point of view. If 'The Art of Dying' and the topic of death are considered grim, this mainly reflects one's own attitudes.



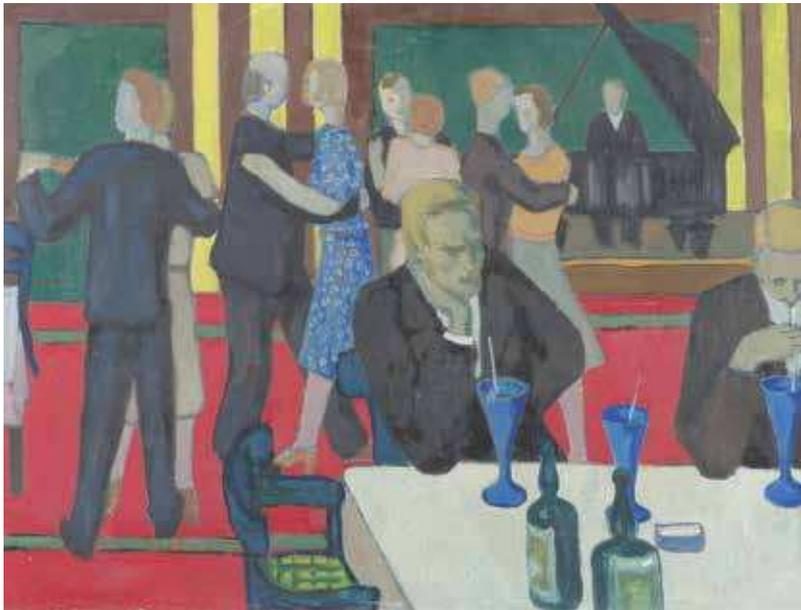
Here we are once again faced with the context of the exhibition, the space in Niguliste Museum. It is white, grand, tranquil and spacious, the Nordic gothic, equally simple and full of light. The light floating around in the church and the empty pews seem to encourage people to ponder, at the end of the exhibition, what death should actually tell the living. I offer one possibility: '*memento mori!*' is not the opposite of another famous slogan: '*carpe diem!*' Quite to the contrary, one supplements the other. Amongst other things, the exhibition displays probably one of the very few items that survived the totally bombed out old town of Narva, from the local German church. It is a mechanical clock figure from 1666 depicting death. Its movement can be understood in two ways: death certainly appears, although it then slides past. These two motifs are like two sides of the same coin. Thus one possible view of the *Art of Dying*, strangely enough, suggests the exact opposite of the title of the exhibition. It can be seen as a wish to live your life so that at the moment of death you can appreciate a life lived well.

**Jan Kaus**  
(1971), MA, freelance  
novelist and literary critic.



# Endel Kõks against the background of art-historical anti-fantasies

Kädi Talvoja



*Dancing*. 1941. Oil, canvas. 50 x 65 cm. Mart Lepp's art collection

Endel Kõks (1912 Tartu, Estonia – 1983 Örebro, Sweden) could be called a most presentable exile Estonian artist, however silly the word combination might seem. Firstly for being represented so well. His collections cannot compete with the legacy of Eduard Wiiralt and Karin Luts that have arrived in Estonia, but compared with many others who left their homeland during WW II<sup>1</sup>, the number of Kõks's works (also produced abroad) in Estonian private collections and museums is relatively large. In connection with celebrating the artist's 100th anniversary at the Tartu Art Museum (*With Bravery, Freedom and Joy*, 14 November 2012–24 March 2013), even more arrived. Also, his rediscovery started already during the Soviet era. The first exhibition took place at the Tartu Art Museum in 1968, including a small selection of pictures made in exile. The 1988 Tartu exhibition relied on the collections of Kõks's sister Maimu Soidla and focused entirely on the exile period, including developments of Cubism, influences of pop art and abstractions. Therefore, despite the first encounter with some of his paintings, the exhibition as a whole was not a total discovery; it was more like a walk down Memory Lane.

Secondly, Kõks was an enthusiastic organiser-writer, who knew exactly what the mecha-

nisms were that would help an artist make it into art history. Already in 1951, when summarising the art life of Estonians in Germany (where he himself lived from 1944 to 1950), he noted: "The number of sales and the foreign art criticism prove that our artists have what it takes to establish themselves internationally. It is only natural that the best of their works are being purchased by solvent foreigners and will thus be lost to Estonian art, remaining 'art made by Estonians'. It is crucial that Estonian organisations and institutions establish a collection or collections of art created in exile. From there, these works of art could find their way back to free Estonia."<sup>2</sup> Later in Sweden, he indeed initiated a project of documenting and collecting exile Estonian art through the Corporation of Estonian Culture. It is a different matter as to how credible the scenario of Estonia becoming free actually was at the time. In practice, this initiative failed, although a small uneven database and picture collection appeared, and today the archive has indeed reached Estonia, whereas the Museum of Estonians Abroad is being enthusiastically founded in Toronto. In addition, a dozen banana crates arrived here in 2012 containing the personal archive of the artist, which clearly proved that, besides his wider mission of mapping the Estonian exile art life, Kõks did not forget to thoroughly document his own life.

All this would have been rather insignificant if Kõks had not left an essential mark in Estonian art history before leaving the country. Despite his youth, he managed to raise high expectations about his future contribution to the development of Estonian art. His talent and singularity were noticed already at the very first public display of his work, in 1938 in Tallinn at an exhibition organised by the Board of the Endowment, two years before graduation from the Pallas Art School. When he finished his studies, he was 28. However, compared with such record-holders as the 'latecomer' Ellinor Aiki, who received her diploma at the age of 43, or Karl Pärsimägi, who was on the school list from 1921 to 1937, Kõks was quite young. By the way, the influence of Pärsimägi is quite clear in

Kõks's pictures. He provided a kind of shortcut to French art, which Kõks managed to see directly only at the French art exhibition in 1939 in the Tallinn Art Hall.

Fantasies born out of broken hopes, to a certain extent, also formed the basis of the jubilee exhibition. The press release promised to compare the work of the 'international man' Kõks with the work of Elmar Kits and Lepo Mikko, two artists who stayed at home and once belonged to the 'Tartu trio'. Not every exile artist evokes art-historical fantasies about 'what would have happened if ...'. The display did not quite manage to present a convincing form for these comparisons, but an exciting topic was raised. This made one ponder the crazy undertaking of moulding the Pallas graduates into Soviet artists. In any case, looking at Kõks's early 1940s picture collection, it is not easy to imagine him painting in the Soviet Estonia of the 1950s. And it is not just due to his avant-garde nature. A proof for that, for example, could be found in the article *Fragments of Tartu Profile* by Kõks, published in 1962 in the magazine *Tulimuld*. Here a conversation between three anonymous artists is presented. Of the three, one was assumed to be Kõks's voice, announcing his credo: "I would like to paint *nature as it more or less is*, but still with a twist. If you look at nature with open eyes, you see such effects there that no artist has seen before." The question deals with the artist's position in general, which was blind to social topics.

The majority of Kõks's Tartu period work, produced during the Soviet and German occupations, is made up of studio and home pictures, with women, either vainly dressed or being nude; there are also still lifes, urban views and of course café scenes. In the context of Estonian art, Kõks indeed produced a remarkable number of café pictures; the earliest are amazingly modern considering the tranquil mainstream of the Pallas school in the late 1930s. Even in 1943, when he was dispatched in an official capacity to German and Austrian labour service camps, which incidentally was his only trip abroad from Estonia, he returned with idyllic pictures of cafés and leisure activities. Also quite a long section in the article mentioned above was devoted to the special atmosphere of cafés, and their importance as centres of intellectual life in Tartu, where essential conversations, exchanges of information, disputes and even



*Gipsy Girl Astra*. 1940. Oil, canvas. 104.5 x 109.6 cm. Art Museum of Estonia



*Music*. 1943. Oil, plywood. 35 x 41.5 cm. Private collection, Estonia

exhibitions took place. However, except for the painting showing lively partying by *Pallas* artists, in Kõks's café pictures the passionate human relationships of the intelligentsia of the time are replaced by colour relations in interior details or tense dialogues between the patterns of the ladies' costumes and the café's curtain fabrics. If any human contacts are depicted in these generally strikingly autistic café situations, they are invariably reduced to, for example, a picture in a mirror, or they are clearly less significant than communication between objects. For instance, there is a view of a locale with dancing people, where, regardless of the bodily closeness of couples, the most striking relationship is going on between three



*Girl in Dressing Gown* (Portrait of Maimu Kõks). 1940. Oil, canvas. 88 x 85 cm. Private collection, Sweden

Events in 1905 (Tallinn at the New Market). Design. 1941. Oil, canvas. 55.5 x 60.5 cm. Tartu Art Museum

bright blue cocktail glasses and the blue dress of a dancing woman, which together with a leg in a light stocking looks like an enlargement of an upside-down goblet with a straw.

The fact that human beings – although clearly dominant in Kõks's paintings – are elements of composition rather or something to keep the colour blotches together is also evident in portraits and nudes. For example the Pallas graduation work *Gypsy Girl Astra* enabled the artist to produce no less than four surfaces with differing decorative ornaments on a bright orange background via the girl. The manner in which he presented the portrait of his sister Maimu, in a red kidney-patterned dressing gown against a bright red background in two different patterns, shocked even such an experienced art critic as Hanno Kompus, who confessed he was lost for words in describing the painting. Over time, Kõks's abrupt colour sense faded, but a weakness for different decorative fabrics pursued him until the end of his Estonia period. True, not in all his nudes have the powerful pattern-games managed to override the eroticism of bare female bodies, but no woman has made it into a picture without vivid, striped, dotted, floral or lacy fabrics. Some smaller sketch-like paintings are especially indifferent towards

the human body; there, the artist has abandoned the traditional impression of depth to the extent that the naked women in their flat stiffness almost seem glued to the pictures. Hence, comparisons with Matisse have frequently been made in analysing Kõks's work.

Still, there is a small exceptional work among Kõks's paintings, quite a curiosity, on the topic of the 1905 revolution, which hints at the possibility of a seemingly improbable switch-over. Here, too, the eye is first caught by rare colour combinations, especially the sudden juxtaposition of the greenish-blue and bright red of the clothes of a man in the foreground. The composition's exalted dynamics, based on diagonals and the militant expressions on people's faces, reveal the artist's hidden potential to step out of the idyllic world of women. Alas, the training of socialist realism, and especially the campaign to break all Pallas traditions, which took a truly brutal form in the late 1940s, would not have left even the red on red of this most wondrous of colourists.



1 According to Kaalu Kirme, about 100 artists left Estonia during the years of WW II. See Kirme, Kaalu, 'Muusad ei väikinud. Kunst Eestis 1941-1944'. *Kunst*, Tallinn 2007, pp 266-267.

2 Kõks, Endel. 'Viis aastat eesti kunsti Saksamaal'. *Tulimuld*, 1951, No 1, p 71.

### Kädi Talvoja

(1974), art historian focusing on the Soviet period. Currently works as a researcher at the Estonian Academy of Arts and is also doing her PhD there.

### Kumu Art Museum

Weizenbergi 34 / Valge 1, Tallinn

<http://www.kumu.ee/en/>

Open: May-Sept Tue, Thu-Sun 11 am-6 pm, Wed 11 am-8 pm  
Oct-April Thu-Sun 11 am-6 pm, Wed 11 am-8 pm

- until 28 July BMW Art Cars
- until 8 Sept *Afterlives of Gardens*
- until 6 Oct Kaljo Põllu. *Estonian Landscape*
- until 6 Oct Irving Penn. *Diverse Worlds*
- until 3 Nov *Critique and Crises. Art in Europe Since 1945*
- until 16 May 2014 Art Museum at the airport: sculptor Mare Mikof
- 20 Sept-12 Jan 2014 *The Progress of Images. Interpreting Estonian Art and Photography of the 19th Century*
- 27 Sept-19 Jan 2014 *Out of Sync. Looking Back at the History of Sound Art*
- 9 Oct-26 Jan 2014 *Monumental Painting in Estonia. Paul Kuimet's Photos*
- 18 Oct-9 Feb 2014 *The Sacred Present. Nikolai Kormashov's Paintings from the 1960s*
- 22 Nov-20 April 2014 Lepo Mikko (1911-1978)

### Kadrioru Art Museum

Kadrioru Palace, Weizenbergi 37, Tallinn

<http://www.kadriorumuseum.ee/en/>

Open: May-Sept Tue-Sun 10 am-5 pm  
Oct-April Wed-Sun 10 am-5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:

Paintings from the 16th-18th century. Dutch, German, Italian and Russian masters. Western European and Russian applied art and sculpture from the 18th-20th century.

- until 18 Aug *Repin. A Russian Master's Life and Work in Finland*
- 7 Sept-9 Mar 2014 *When the Artist Met Clio. Historical Scenes from the 19th Century*

### Mikkel Museum

Weizenbergi 28, Tallinn

<http://www.mikkelimuseum.ee/en/>

Open: Wed 10 am-8 pm, Thu-Sun 10 am-5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:

Collection of Johannes Mikkel: the Art of Western Europe, Russia, and China from 16th-20th centuries.

- until 13 Oct *From a Lion to a Bullfinch. Animals in Art from the Stern Family Collection*
- 2 Nov-16 Mar 2014 *In the Beginning Was the Word. Historical Bibles from Jaan Parusk's Collection*

### Niguliste Museum

Niguliste 3, Tallinn

<http://www.nigulistemuuseum.ee/en/>

Open: Wed-Sun 10 am-5 pm

Permanent exhibitions:

Ecclesiastical Art from the 14th-20th centuries, The Silver Chamber.

### Adamson-Eric Museum

Lühike jalg 3, Tallinn

<http://www.adamson-eric.ee/en/>

Open: Wed-Sun 11 am-6 pm

Permanent exhibition:

*Works by Adamson-Eric.* Adamson-Eric (1902-1968) is one of the most outstanding Estonian painters of the 20th century. He also devoted much of his time to applied art.

- until 1 Sept *Viljandi Painter Juhan Muks (1899-1983)*
- 6 Sept-24 Nov *The Denizens of the Estonia Theatre in Fine Arts*
- 4 Dec-16 Mar 2014 *Creative Dialogue. The Artist Couple Mari Adamson and Adamson-Eric*

### Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design

Lai Street 17, Tallinn

[www.etdm.ee](http://www.etdm.ee)

Open: Wed-Sun 11 am-6 pm

Permanent exhibition of Estonian design

- Until 15 Sept *Hand in Hand.* The 90th anniversary of the Ceramic Department of the Estonian Academy of Arts
- Until 12 Jan 2014 *Between Art and Industry.* The Art Products' Factory ARS
- 21 June-22 Sept Plates
- 28 Sept-24 Nov *Chamos.* Estonian contemporary fashion design
- 7 Dec-23 Feb 2014 *Classics.* Mait Summatavet

### Museum of Estonian Architecture

Rotermann's Salt Storage

Ahtri 2, Tallinn

<http://www.arhitektuurimuuseum.ee>

Open: Wed 12 am-6 pm, Thu 12 am-8 pm, Fri-Sun 11 am-6 pm

Permanent exhibition: *Architectural Models From the Museum's Collection*

- Until 11 Aug Estonian Society of Interior Architects Awards 2012
- 27 June-22 Sept *100 Steps in the Estonian 20th Century Architecture*
- 20 June-25 Aug Modern Architecture in Helsinki

### The Museum of Contemporary Art of Estonia

Põhja pst 35, Tallinn

[www.ekkm.ee](http://www.ekkm.ee)

Open from April-October: Tue-Sun 1 pm-7 pm

- 23 June-28 July *Side Effects*
- 3 Aug-8 Sept Mark Raidpere. *Damage*
- 14 Sept-20 Oct *And So On And So Forth vol 2*

### Tallinn Art Hall

Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn

[www.kunstihoone.ee](http://www.kunstihoone.ee)

Open: Wed-Sun 12 am-6 pm

- 3 July-11 Aug Valeri Vinogradov
- 21 Aug-22 Sept *Music is Movement is Image is Music*
- 27 Sept-27 Oct *Now is the Time.* Tallinn Month of Photography. Curated by Niekolaas Lekkerkerk (NE)
- 1 Nov-15 Dec Artists' Group ANK 64

## Tallinn Art Hall Gallery

Vabaduse väljak 6, Tallinn  
[www.kunstihoone.ee](http://www.kunstihoone.ee)  
 Open: Wed-Sun 12 am-6 pm

27 June-21 July	Jass Kaselaan
25 July-18 Aug	Ado Lill
23 Aug-15 Sept	Enn Põldroos
19 Sept-13 Oct	<i>Sculpture Machines</i>
27 July-19 Aug	Evi Tihemets
17 Oct-10 Nov	Ivo Lill
14 Nov-8 Dec	Mati Karmin
12 Dec-5 Jan 2014	Laurentsius

## Tallinn City Gallery

Harju 13, Tallinn  
[www.kunstihoone.ee](http://www.kunstihoone.ee)  
 Open: Wed-Sun 12 am-6 pm

20 June-14 July	Kimmo Metsäranta (FI)
18 July-11 Aug	Art Allmägi
15 Aug-8 Sept	Carmen Lansberg
12 Sept-6 Oct	Anna-Stina Treumund
10 Oct-3 Nov	Maria Ader
7 Nov-1 Dec	Ivar Veermäe
5 Dec-29 Dec	Liisa Kruusmägi

## Hobusepea Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn  
[www.eaa.ee/hobusepea/english/enindex1.htm](http://www.eaa.ee/hobusepea/english/enindex1.htm)  
 Open: Wed-Mon 11 am-6 pm

26 June-15 July	Olivia Verev & Maarja Nurk. <i>I Can't See What You Think</i>
17 July-5 Aug	Edith Karlson
7 Aug-26 Aug	Antonio Claudio Carvalho (BR/UK). <i>The Naked Artists</i>
28 Aug-9 Sept	Estonian Academy of Arts Young Art Award - Holger Loodus
11 Sept-30 Sept	Manfred Dubov Kalatski
2 Oct-14 Oct	Taavi Talve
16 Oct-28 Oct	Kirke Kangro. <i>Room 101</i>
30 Oct-11 Nov	<i>Hidden Painting</i> . Curated by Vano Allsalu
13 Nov-25 Nov	Laura Kuusk
27 Nov-16 Dec	Piibe Piirma
18 Dec-6 Jan 2014	Estonian Sculptors' Union

## HOP Gallery

Hobusepea 2, Tallinn  
[www.eaa.ee/hop](http://www.eaa.ee/hop)  
 Open: Thu-Tue 11 am-6 pm

4 July-23 July	Kersti Vaks
25 July-13 Aug	Aigi Orav
15 Aug-3 Sept	Kristel Saan
5 Sept-24 Sept	Sergei Isupov
26 Sept-15 Oct	Marit Ilison
17 Oct-5 Nov	Ketli Tiitsar
7 Nov-26 Nov	Neeme Külm
28 Nov-17 Dec	Group <i>Shortcut</i> (Jens A. Clausen, Katarina Kotsalainen, Joanna Innos, Paul Villemi)
19 Dec-7 Jan 2014	Anne Türn

## Draakon Gallery

Pikk 18, Tallinn  
<http://www.eaa.ee/draakon/english/eindex.htm>  
 Open: Mon-Fri 11 am-6 pm, Sat 11 am-5 pm

25 Jun-13 July	Jaan Elken. <i>Malecón</i>
15 July-27 July	Mariliis Tammi-Kelder
29 July-10 Aug	Alessandro Volpin (IT/EE)
12 Aug-24 Aug	<i>Punctum</i>
26 Aug-7 Sept	Kaia Kaskla
9 Sept-28 Sept	Manfred Dubov Kalatski
30 Sept-12 Oct	Ülle Marks
14 Oct-26 Oct	Dagmar Kase
28 Oct-9 Nov	Mart Vainre
11 Nov-23 Nov	Kristiina Hansen
25 Nov-7 Dec	Pire Sova
9 Dec-28 Dec	Maike Lond
30 Dec-18 Jan	Mare Mikof

## Tartu Art Museum

Raekoja Square 18, Tartu  
[www.tartmus.ee](http://www.tartmus.ee)  
 Open: Wed-Sun 11 am-6 pm

until 26 Jan 2014	<i>Between Forest and Sea</i> . Estonian landscape painting
4 July-25 Aug	Marge Monko. <i>How to Wear Red?</i>
5 Sept-3 Nov	<i>ARTISTKUKU NU UT</i> . Contemporary art festival
8 Nov-19 Jan 2014	August Künnapu. <i>The River of Life</i>
3 July-28 July	Industrial landscape in Estonian Art
31 July-25 Aug	Nikolai Kormashov 1929-2012
28 Aug-29 Sep	Estonian jewellery
2 Oct-10 Nov	Anu Juurak. <i>Express</i>
13 Nov-8 Dec	Museum's Choice 2013
11 Dec-26 Jan 2014	Jevgeni Zolotko

## Tartu Art House

Vanemuise 26, Tallinn  
[kunstimaja.ee](http://kunstimaja.ee)  
 Open: Wed-Mon 12 am-6 pm

Big hall	
12 July-28 July	<i>The Ninth Circle of Obsession</i> . Curated by Izabela Oldak
1 Aug-25 Aug	Stanislav Netchvolodov
29 Aug-22 Sept	Hans-Gunter Lock, Taavi Suisalu, Kilian Ochs
26 Sept-20 Oct	Tallinn Month of Photography. Exhibition curated by Anneli Porri
23 Oct-17 Nov	Kursi Artists' Group
18 Nov-15 Dec	Exhibition curated by Kirke Kangro
16 Dec-12 Jan 2014	End of Year Exhibition

Small hall	
2 July-28 July	Konrad Mägi Studio
31 July-25 Aug	Oulu Artists' Association (in collaboration)
29 Aug-22 Sept	Vilen Künnapu
26 Sept-20 Oct	Tõnu Tunnel. Artprint Prize exhibition
23 Oct-17 Nov	Kursi Artists' Group
18 Nov-15 Dec	Kai Kaljo
16 Dec-12 Jan 2014	End of Year Exhibition

